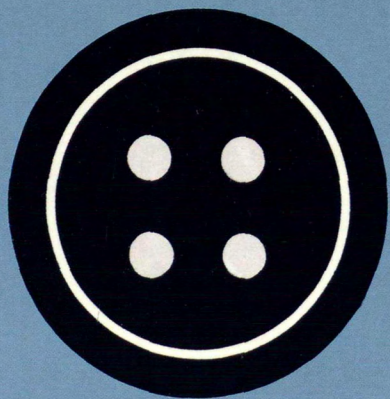
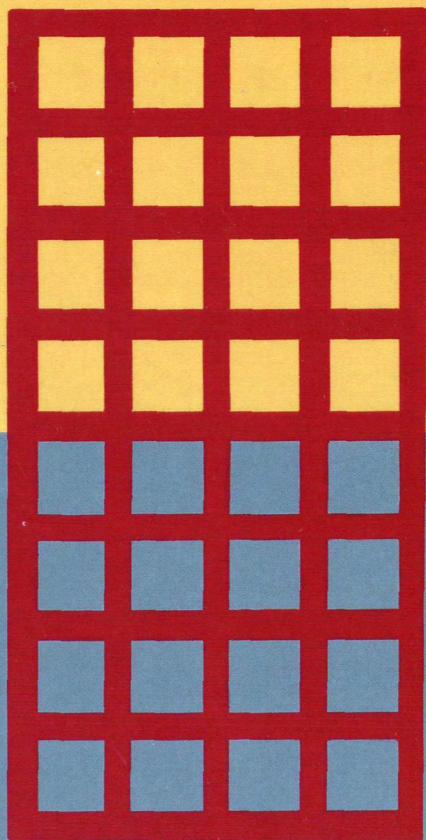


o·blēk



o·blēk

⁵**oblique** (*o•blēk*) *Anat.* Having a direction parallel neither to the long axis of the body or limb, nor to its transverse section; said esp. of certain muscles; also of various lines, ridges, ligaments, etc. *Oblique processes of the vertebrae*: ZYGAPOPHYSES. 1615 CROOKE *Body of Man* 801 If each Muscle worke by it selfe, then the oblique descendent drawes the haunch obliquely to his owne side . . . the oblique ascendent leadeth the chest obliquely to the haunches. 1838 *Penny Cycl.* X. 141/1 When the oblique muscles act together with force, they hold the eye-ball firmly against the lids and to the nasal side of the orbit.

o·blek/5

A JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE ARTS

EDITED BY
PETER GIZZI AND CONNELL McGRATH



THE GARLIC PRESS

o•blēk

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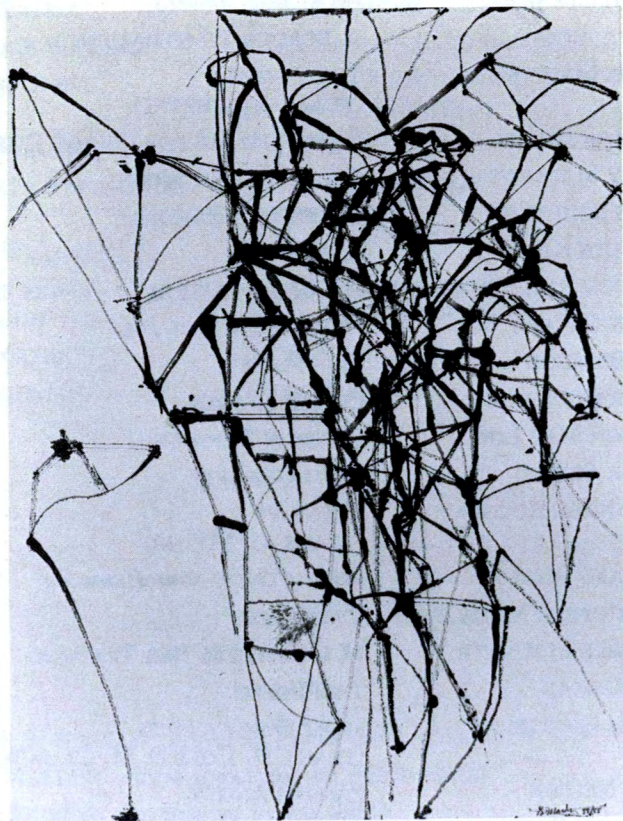
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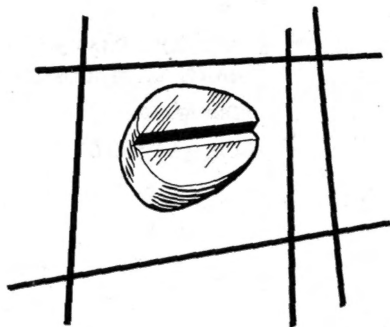
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ART

TREVOR WINKFIELD	Cover & <i>Locus Solus</i> colophons	1989
BRICE MARDEN	Frontispiece ink on paper	1988
DAVID STOREY	charcoal on paper	1988
	pp. 10, 24, 32, 69, 70, 112, 125, 126	
JANE HAMMOND	paintings	1988
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This issue is dedicated to
the editors of the journal *Locus Solus*,
in memory of Joseph Ceravolo.

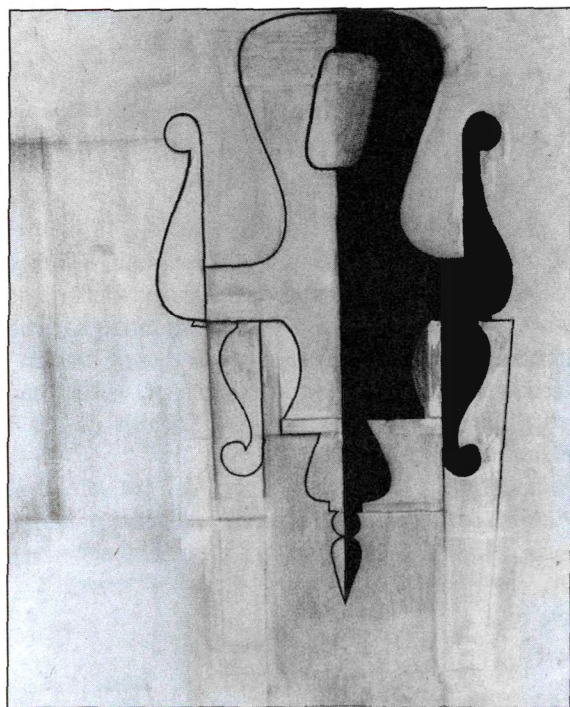


Now, it was by the light of a bright sunbeam, which was shining through an immense glass canopy sheltering the threshold, that Europe was now reflected in the half-moon of her nail. Already badly shaken, the young woman remained hypnotized by this brilliant red spot, whose characteristic shape she could plainly distinguish despite the inversion of east and west.

Motionless and distraught, she said in a flat voice (under the influence of her environment instinctively adopting French, which she spoke like her native tongue):

'In the half-moon . . . all Europe . . . red . . . the whole of it . . .'

from *Locus Solus*,
Raymond Roussel



JOSEPH CERAVOLO



FROM *MAD ANGELS*

SONNET

In the middle of Autumn
early when the skies
show the dawn
still hovering in trees
and the geese, a series
of arrows break form
for another unknown bird
that catches our eyes,
I can't return.
While overhead one storm
in the bird's neck feathers carries
the dampness of the journey

soaked with our laughs and whispers
in the subterfuge of happiness.

HYMN TO RAIN

Again rain on the evolved leaves.
Rain in the jungle forest
where people tend the garden
or hunt the monkey.
Rain where people pound the pavement

and wet trucks rest
after a flashing night.
Rain that dissolves the mount
or fills the valley
or breaks the dam

or wakes the face
washes the hair
stiffens the organ.

Rain that dissolves the dreams
or creates the dreams
in atmospheric phantoms.

O, praise be rain, praise be mist
praise be fish deep and dark,
praise be stirring ocean
and starting wind,
and kinematic waves
in altered motion.

Rain before life, rain before
 death
Praise be rain again, rain again praise!

PAGES OF STORMS

There is no pleasure, yet there is.
North wind drives snow.
Old people shuffle along
on their way through ice.
Yet there is an only world
where songs come
over the air waves
not the great Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert,
but laments of country blues.
A dragon snorts through the woods
invisible flames melt
 the path of snow.
Trees still hold serenity.
There's no heaven on earth,
no ecstasy persisting like a night storm
no tiger in the bushes, yet there is.

ELEGY

Eros is lying next to us
following you through the garden
where sexual dreams make you blush.
We are only human.

He is living in us
like in the little girl playing with mud
who is a woman?

Or when in the flames of evil
his love cries out to us

See the autumn flowers
 they send out for Eros
 who picks the buds
for immortality, like singers in make up

reaching out to him.

But Eros lies on top of us
in the pains of pleasure.

Where dreams pull out like trains,
the tracks lain upon out bodies,

Eros flies over head in the dark
eyes closed in confused ecstasy.

does he sleep or does he die
 while we awaken
in the flesh?

TOXIC WASTES

Poor animal, his dead tail waving
in the wake of a passing car.
He's stone dead
as are his brothers and sisters
in other cities of the world.

It's hard to consider its life
yet one of us dies
with the same frequency.
Such lamentations arise.
These bums are lying
on the sidewalk of 8th avenue
old coat pulled over them
waving in the breeze,
while millions pass them
like cars pass the animals.

Yet look at insects
and smaller pinions
or the trees in ancient majesty
overhead, such innocence
in the roots.

One car avoids the animal
another over its head,
runner trots by.
The tree its sunny leaves
waving darkly underneath
with giant shiny crows
flying atop

O light from our only sun
ties chemical chains
to our only body,
shines almost forever, burns!

MODERN SORROWS

Don't be afraid my light,
tumbling in the darkness of delight,
in the echo of modern sorrows
covered over by arrows of sight.

Don't languish in the deep furrow
like turned earth in the marrow
of Spring getting ready to sprout
peeking from dirt's first green rows.

Don't be afraid to shout out
whether lost love or feverish bout
imprisons you and freedom explodes
finally (in the heart) the doubt
folds up and the chest unloads
bright arrows of new light.

SUNSET

Why do I follow you

through these woods?

Now I've found

that grey and yellow bird

dying in my hand.

What do I do with it?

A song of the night

wakes me

and in my hand lies you

in the matter of all fear.

A song of the people,
of forbidden lies,
of surrounding night and legs
and emptiness.

A call in the night!

O beggars, O masters,
Why leave? We are only beggars
as we pull ourselves up
in the erotic stratifications
before the sunset of your blush.

JOHN ASHBERY



A BORDER TEMPERAMENT

Dears, breeze, be
unlit table top for awhile—
gets you out, in, gets
funny after straying

with you, wash lentils
down. I was speaking
with thee, had tantrum,
rages still on the page

of five and twenty discordant
hum, orgy of plan-
ning, rain that thrums.
But somehow in wide

chalks discards the flow.
The weather was to be up.
He massaged her hands
her not knitting—it

left it out, not too expensive,
unwitting. He confessed
late last night
that he had

by one too many excuses
destroyed the border
or obfuscated. How uncommon
can you be lemon?

Is it my cat understands
and I am wary unto death?
Get me a boy to
pray for me, a rib

cage to wear in blast
area and all the cars
come toward me, cursed
in being late I shall

anent reality gasp,
plug in more axiom,
promise, to be tulip
tree and gosh, gash

the knuckling spring
flooding out of storage
to be by last me
the way we all it see

timed in produce booth,
tempered, why we put that
on and away all the time.
No running back to it

just to stare and be shamed
in the light buzzing around
this last head in the tree
for it is a fig to take out

as apples to remove the border,
fussed black line that does
everything save wall up and is
a worry in the new light that is

always unexpected, always
a surprise as well—look at them
teetering, vast rocks pinned
to a horizon. It is

paper now, on paper
the miner's well
closed up and solicitous.
The dance fiends

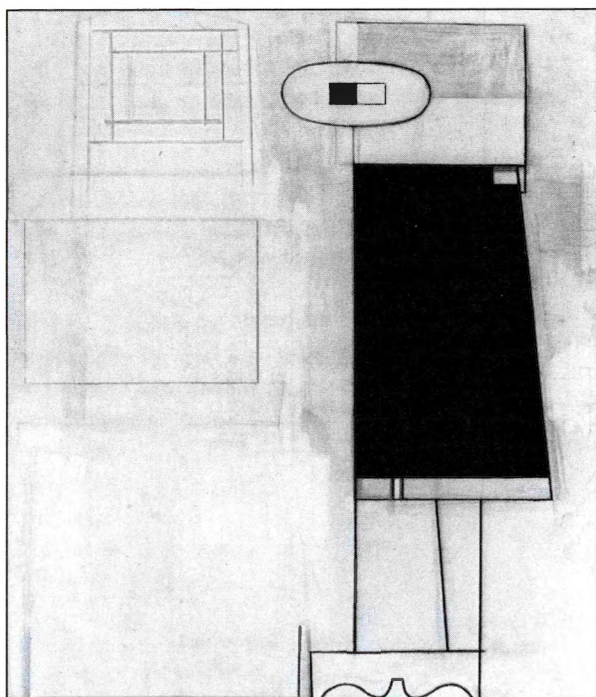
found the new talk the others
quizzical came over and she
lost me with her talking,
now she only cares

where she goes and isn't taking
me but I fare better this nose
is cold and runs out behind the tree
of faces sure enough.

We all were vociferous
and when that time came
to give away the night were
enchanted with the burden,

rife to put off
socks, gloves, make it
a fenced hold, not unbearing
but sweetly curled up, an ash

beneath the willow that bends
bearing me ever to thee—
I found out what head.
I have to go to school.



PIERRE MARTORY



CAREER A VISIT

translated from the French by
John Ashbery

CAREER

While the child played with a hoop
The ladies were singing in their bridal gowns
Count your buttons draw your lot
Red trousers attract the girls
I embraced my mother and the new career
At the end of the road to the noise of the cannon
Don't be a jerk Fanfan la Tulipe
Often one returns one-armed from Flanders
Syphilitic from Naples one-eyed from Venice
From Rome a vicar from Cologne bald
From Yorktown a cuckold from Algiers a pimp
And if one returns from Trocadero
The sedate lady with her ass in the wind
Asks a hundred sous to do the same
From him who stayed nice and warm
While Fanfan spilled his guts like a hero.

A VISIT

In her haste to approach the tree
—Its peeling bark, its spices,
Through the white forest a hum of afternoon—
The person
Ermine whose white body pricked with black cuts
Where the frost dwindles,
Has cracked its skull with blows of the fist.
Spider emptied of thread, still-horrified clock,
Measure of a compact universe, of the whole of night . . .

It was the first time I hadn't slept alone.
I cried out her name, my jaws dislocated.
Children under the umbrella mentioned oranges
Danced around solidified fountains
In front of windows that had long been shut.
She touched my belly
And her hand turned blue.
A whole page of it turned unreadable
On which were mingled constellated postcards
Landscape seen from the ship's rail, and savannahs.
Then I began to see that I would lose
Unless I spoke immediately
I forced myself to stay within myself

Ah! to paint the ordinary days, weddings, visits to the maternity ward!
To plant under doors the wild branches of the telephone
To fix, date, number the place where I am

Bedrooms, zoos, dance halls, broken domes, brawls . . .
I go out, I grope ex-divas in a taxi and I take shape
In the hollow of their elbows raised at table around some music.
Irreplacable rot, wasted machine,
Absent sleep, disgusting train,
Facade rubbed against the wind.

You sit down. Serpent. At your neck the shadow
Of forks traces an exit.
Red and blue flower the ugly convolvulus
Like you, whistles. The distant bird
Throws its first stone or plays the harp.
I had come to watch the swoon
Of my bold twin pulled from the dream
And I find I am a door on the eye
To have a drink that grows iridescent as it crosses the ages
My head wrapped with strips of spices
When the children speak of oranges
Around the garrulous fountains.

BARBARA GUEST



BORROWED MIRROR, FILMIC RISE

Arriving speeds the chromatic precedent
finger-proof we stay with note fired

arrows jasper pontifex declares a swift
gradient recalls imaginative risk

astride cemented moss a climatic
tour bulges in a slice aramanth

painted motley the filmic rise
halted like a rower who weeds a natural

shield refreshed in hunches
juice homecoming mangled dormer oak

from borrowed mirror promissory rain
in tidal rhythm seizure a magnetic

crystal pruner the limned
air page eye dirtied cowl

clover pigeon how wide a barrier grazed
lilac pruned wilder eyedusked

lilac eyedust

melancholic limn

dark floor flushing crimson

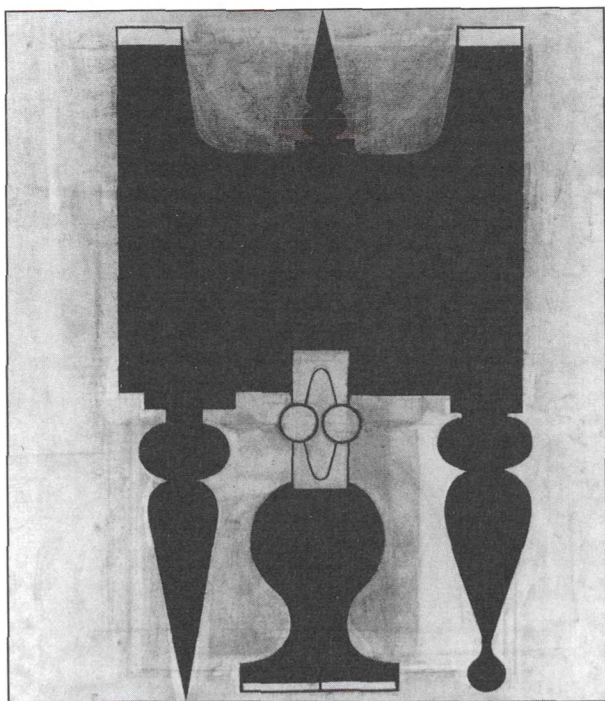
pruned eyedust

limned severe and slowly

dawn of red bricks

paginated

the lineal glister thumb



HARRY MATHEWS



CONSTRUCTION WORK

Even if you keep your eye on the ground, whole clubs of
worms will sometimes go on hiding there.
Stay conscious not only of that vanguard doubt but also of
how important a trail now is to us
To verbally wag a local presence out of the realm of rumors
and hypotheses—

A trail, a squiggle. Remember the pesky enigma that vexed
entire days with guessing and fencing?
A big rock pitches down a slope, familiarly crashing and
careening; however,
No boulder ever fell without someone there listening, copying
the sound into his memory.

Now admit this big possibility: a rock giving way may fall
straight onto your cranium
Between your two ears. To put matters another way: to hear
or read such an account or a boulder's vague crash
Will never replace, never intend replacing, the mum fact that
it was set flying by

One's pencil. Witnesses formally and verbally disagree as
to what next
Occurs, or whether something did or didn't, or, if it did
(whether peevishly or bountifully), whether
Most of us, succumbing to lowly doings and distractions,
might avail us of that prompt instant for taking it in:

The sound could have come from the bonded flock of
songsters that confused us when they spread along the
edge of the pond.

Hardly few but far between, clucking pertly in the reeds;
might have been the stylus ticking

In the winding of the spiral's disappearance after the cantata's
end; might have been anything,

This not-nothing which we overtly consider to be something
like "This most definitely did not occur" (even if it is
possible to exclude some things and events

On account of triviality and significant clang, such as war
in its primly brutal clangor,

War so popular among hammock fullbacks slumped over gay
tomes

Stuffed with registered musketry). Nearly anything, this
privileged unabsence called what wasn't,

And not only things and events, which probably lose interest
when recognized as mere finalities,

But, besides, to re-use very shopworn economic terms, their
modes of production. I'm thinking explicitly of the

Cosmos Wood, Brick, and Mortar Corporation, originally an
Italo-Cuban family association that was first known as
The Cosmos Concrete Company, now a gung-ho coast-to-coast
purveyor of nuts and bolts as well as land-sea transport to
Hefty builders, but still human, still giving their all, still
a bunch we identify with, particularly because

Of their avowedly self-serving recalls (the abdicating king
posts, the Teflon-based cement),

Openings in the even better-publicized screen of up-to-the-
minute Tokyo-whomp efficiency
Through which all madly rush to savor a fallibility of brainy
captains and cohorts—

A chance that enmeshes us so much more unforgettably than
when we observe or even contemplate
A very happy affair perfectly rendered, that's when we all
start desperately thumbing
The TV gismo and settle for Channel 2. What I want to do is
make Isabella, Marchioness of Yaphank,

Without knowing who she is, or where she's truly from, could
be not even precisely how he looks,
But particularly not having words around us that in naming
doom us both and all to spasms of packaging—
Unless, unless at the very end, after the bows, too late for
help, too late to come or go, too late to hurt

My realizing that the suddenly uncurtained ensemble in which
I find us is a vainly perfect fragment;
That looming in the dispeopled field of light that is both
wavering backdrop and the only depth I have,
Looming in the alley outside the stage door, in the suburbs,
in glacial coombs, a black dawn is taking charge.

JAMES SCHUYLER



UNDER THE HANGER

from Gilbert White's Journals

Wood lark whistles. Hogs carry straw.
Sky lark sings.
Young cucumber swells.
Frogs croak: spawn abounds.
Cold & black. Harsh, hazy day.
Backward apples begin to blow.
Frost, sun, fog, rain, snow. Bunting twitters.
No dew, rain, rain, rain.
Swans flounce & dive.
Chilly & dark.
Dark and spitting. Indian flowers in Dec'r!
Ground very wet. The nightingale sings.
Blackcap sings. The sedge-bird a delicate polyglott.
The titlark begins to sing: a sweet songster!
Turtle coos.
Asparagus begins to sprout.
Cuckoo cries.
No house-martins appear.

Apricots, peaches, & nectarines swell:
sprinkled trees with water, & watered the roots.
Oaks are felled: the bark runs freely.
The leaves of the mulberry trees hardly begin to peep.
Showers, sun & clouds, brisk air.
Much hay spoiled: much not cut.

Put meadow hay in large cock.
Hay well made at last.
Sun, sweet day.

All things in a drowning condition!

First day of winter. Snow on the ground.
Gathered in all the grapes. Snow on the hills.
Full moon.
Rooks resort to their nest-trees.
Grey & sharp.
Earth-worms lie out & copulate.
Great rain. Hops sadly washed.
Ice bears: boys slide.

Rain, rain, rain.

The road in a most dusty, smothering condition.
Full moon. My well is shallow & the water foul.
The grass burns.
A plant of missle-toe grows on a bough of the medlar.
The air is full of insects.
Turkies strut and gobble.
Snow wastes: eaves drip. Cocks crow.
Sun, bright & pleasant.
The boys are playing in their shirts.
Bees thrive. Asparagus abounds.
Dark & chilly, rain. Cold & comfortless.
Mossed the white cucumber bed.
Snow covers the ground.

Planted 12 goose-berry trees, & three monthly roses,
& three Provence roses.

The voice of the cockow is heard in the hanger.

Grass lamb.

Grey, sprinkling, gleams with thunder.

Wavy, curdled clouds, like the remains of thunder.

Pease are hacked: rye is reaping: turnips thrive &
are hoing.

Stifling dust.

Sweet moonshine.

Boys slide on the ice!

Dew, bright, showers: thunder, gleam of sun.

Straw-berries, scarlet, cryed about.

Straw-berries dry, & tasteless.

Taw & hop-sotch come in fashion among the boys.

The sun mounts and looks down on the hanger.

Crown Imperials blow, & stink.

Much gossamer.

Moles work, & heave up their hillocks.

Ice within doors.

Rime.

Snow on the ground.

Snow in the night: snow five inches deep.

Snow on the ground.

Icicles hang in eaves all day.

Snow lies on the hill.

Crocus's make a gaudy show.
Cuculus cuculat: the voice of the cuckoo is heard in
 Blackmoor woods.
The air is filled with floating willow-down.
Fog, sun, pleasant showers, moonshine.
Here & there a wasp.
Black-birds feed on the elder-berries.
Frost, ice, sun pleasant moon-light.
Frost, ice, bright, red even, prodigious white dew.
Thunder, lightening, rain, snow!

Vast damage in various parts!
No frost.
Daffodil blows.

Daffodil blows.
Sweet weather. Mackerel.
Soft wind. The woodpecker laughs.
Cinnamon-roses blow.
Flowers smell well this evening: some dew.
The distant hills look very blue.

Clouds, hail, shower, gleams.
Sharp air, & fire in the parlor.
Sweet day, golden even, red horizon.
Snow-drops, & crocus's shoot.
Vast frost-work on the windows.
Longest day: a cold, harsh solstice!

Thunder & hail.
Yellow evening.
Potatoes blossom.
Men cut their meadows.
Goose-berries wither on the trees.
The seeds of the lime begin to fall.
Grey, & mild, gleams.
Grey, sun, pleasant, yellow even.
Dark & wet.
Rain, rain, gleams. Venus resplendent.
Showers of hail, sleet. Gleams.
The *Cuckoo* is heard on Greatham common.

Cut the first cucumber.
Pulled the first radish.
Early orange-lilies blow.
Cut *five* cucumbers.
Bright, sun, golden even.
Cut *eight* cucumbers.
Provence roses blow against a wall.
Cut *ten* cucumbers.
Dames violets very fine.

Men wash their sheep.

KENNETH KOCH



KNEES

Which way are we going
She doesn't recognize
The frog's hat
The Dybbuk
Eating some chicken
A star horse
We're you
You're fluent
Like a time of lust

Back ball Fragonard
Each by a chosen
Pack horse annual
Tea pound sing
A vaster
Sun up
Village for out
Baseball things
Miles by the sun
Whisp it's gone
And no way back
By waistline secrets
Fill

Remiss
Tryst cables
I came up
To see my pupils
Down she went
And the true cross
A sky a finch a street
The untokening
Yet badger-eyed descent

Into the flowers
Oh loved one in the flowers
Oh sheep in the flowers
Oh jeans in the flowers
Oh feet in the flowers
Oat, wheat in the flowers
Goat asleep in the flowers
Motet heap in the flowers
Shows weep in the flowers
I protect
A village paradise
Exaggerated the flowers
But not asleep

We took her woes
We took them to marinas
We took them to waltz
We took them backwards
We took walkings
We took fans
We will take baby activism
Firing toward a pan

Which we believe
A store is housy
Bar gets blousy
Which director
Takes the moulted keys

I would be vines
I would Easter
Bed in the flowers
Cables in the flowers
Nothing in paradise
Took them to waltz
I took secrets
Waist and knee
Blackening
Sweeping
A store
Of the beds' hats
Pea lows O
Dracula pities thee

Town of Shelly Gowns of gates
Frowns of bellies
Sounds of late
Minischools of William Butler Yeats
Doughs makings met creameries
Place in the flowers all of streets' walls
For the reticularity
For the retorque
For the opus of the same.

KENNETH KOCH
&
FRANK O'HARA



COLLECTED POEMS
&
COLLECTED PROSES, A RESPONSE

COLLECTED POEMS

BUFFALO DAYS

I was asleep when you waked up the buffalo.

THE ORANGE WIVES

A mountain of funny foam went past.

GREAT HUMAN VOICES

The starlit voices drip.

COLORFUL HOUR

A few green pencils in a born pocket.

EXPRESSION

New little tray.

SLEEP

The bantam hen frayed its passage through the soft clouds.

A MINERAL WICK

Town soda.

SOMEWHERE

Between islands and envy.

CECELIA

Look, a cat.

THE SILVER WORLD

Expands.

JEWELRY SEVENTHS

Minor wonders.

AN ESKIMO COCA COLA

Three-fifths.

THE EXCEPTION PROVES THE RULE

Eight-fifths.

Nine-fifths.

Three-fifths.

Six-fifths.

THE WATER HOSE IS ON FIRE

Grapeline.

THE LINGERING MATADORS

Eskimo City.

EGYPT

Passiveness.

IS THERE A HOUSE INSIDE THAT FUEL ENGINE?

Extra aging will bring your craft over against the rosy skies.

WHY WEREN'T THEY MORE CAREFUL?

Actions.

PEANUT BUTTER CANDY

Ichthious.

THE BRINDLE COWS

Dairy farm, dairy farm,

H-O-T

H-E-A-D.

IN THE MERRY FOAM

Ask them for the blue patience of lovers.

MY MIXUP

The cherries after a shower.

MILKWEED EMBLEMS

The chambered nautilus is weak.

SUPPOSE

Red and white riding hoods.

THE GREEN MEDDLER

Aged in the fire.

A HOUSE IN MISSISSIPPI

Who stole all my new sander supplies?

WICKED OBJECTS

Aeroliths.

FRESH LIMES

A couple's bedroom slippers.

THE WINDOW

The chimney.

PAINTED FOR A ROSE

The exacting pilgrims were delighted with yellow fatigue.

NOONS

Bubbles.

ROOMS

Simplex bumblebees.

IN THE RANCHHOUSE AT DAWN

O corpuscle!

O wax town!

THE OUTSIDES OF THINGS

The sky fold, and then the bus started up.

THE BLACK LION

Never stop revealing yourself.

IN THE COAL MUD

At breakfast we could sob.

THE HAND-PAINTED EARS OF DEATH

Oh look inside me.

ALABAMA

Alabama!

COLLECTED PROSES, AN ANSWER

BUFFALO DAYS

Damned damage! Ugh, and this barbed wire tastes like
feathers.

THE ORANGE WIVES

Idling along, I saw a muskrat kissing a mushroom in the
merry autumn.

GREAT HUMAN VOICES

John L. Sullivan, Tiger Flowers, Dizzy Gillespie, oh Bobo
Olson!

COLORFUL HOUR

In Scandinavia the raindrops are manicured.

EXPRESSION

Yeah!

SLEEP

At present writing THE PRODIGAL starring Lana Turner has
run for 30 seconds.

A MINERAL WICK

He went to sleep quickly in the garage, puffing away on his
exhaustion.

SOMEWHERE

Baby Katherine is munching a little celluloid.

CECELIA

Play it, girl!

THE SILVER WORLD

Can I talk to you? Just let me talk to you! just for a minute!

JEWELRY SEVENTHS

The automat sitting on the cloud, the airability of buns, the
green ohs.

AN ESKIMO COCA COLA

The Art Institute of Chicago has authorized me to change you,
dear.

THE EXCEPTION PROVES THE RULE

A glass palace : ripe pears : : Bobo Olson : The Silver World.

THE WATER HOSE IS ON FIRE

Lake Superior lying across my shoulders, what maribou
scents!

THE LINGERING MATADORS

Babe, Lysistrata, Cutenick, Ambrose, the Duke and Duchess
of . . . eek!

EGYPT

Now let's not be too serious.

IS THERE A HOUSE INSIDE THAT FUEL ENGINE?

Yup.

WHY WEREN'T THEY MORE CAREFUL?

D. W. GRIFFITH CAUGHT ON FIR TREE ORGY CLAIMS
FIFTH AMENDMENT INVITATION!

PEANUT BUTTER CANDY

The sea lapping along, and then the laps seeing, and the Sea
collapsing.

THE BRINDLE COWS

Seriousness, to the King, meant next to nothing, I should add
here.

IN THE MERRY FOAM

Jane and Kenneth and Larry and Frank (Bill and Elaine and
Leo watching).

MY MIXUP

I saw him at the dock. I saw her in the bar. I ate. I wrote to
Yaddo.

MILKWEED EMBLEMS

A sort of epithalamium mess, they call them, oh hell, they're
brown.

SUPPOSE

Riding along with a song on your dong in the fong o'er
Hongkong.

THE GREEN MEDDLER

How serious *is* meddling?

A HOUSE IN MISSISSIPPI

I can read but I can't live, that's my trouble. Smell that
wisteria?

WICKED OBJECTS

Honey bars, bears' toenails, ichthyology, pessimistic surprise,
jewels.

FRESH LIMES

Say there, little girl blue, rinse your hair!

THE WINDOW

starring Arthur Kennedy, Ruth Roman, Barbara Hale and
Bobby Driscoll.

PAINTED FOR A ROSE

Baby Katherine is only two weeks old. She loves wearing
makeup.

NOONS

Yes, John, I'd love to lunch. No, it's too expensive. I hate it
there, o.k.

ROOMS

Pressed against a pane of glass, the detective couldn't get his
gun out.

IN THE RANCHHOUSE AT DAWN

Would you pass me that copy of TWO SERIOUS LADIES
over
there on the bunk?

THE OUTSIDES OF THINGS

Intriguing, what? then we went motoring, and THEN we went
home together through the tires.

THE BLACK LION

"How much?" "Nothing." "What good is it then?" "It's fun." "Oh
yeah?"

IN THE COAL MUD

It's heaven! It's like reading Gerard de Nerval for the last time.

THE HAND-PAINTED EARS OF DEATH

The rancher didn't think he'd remember him, but there he was
right smack dab in the way again, bucking and snorting
like a woman.

ALABAMA

All this is Alabama at dawn in the muddy ranchhouse
seriously painting jewelry in the window of foam.

Frank O'Hara

FRANK O'HARA



FROM *THE 4TH OF JULY*

THE DAY BEFORE THE 4TH

In the beginning the city was all his. He lorded it over everybody. He was his father's son all right. He roamed everywhere and thought a lot.

The water had surrendered to the roses as easily as that. Or what he had said about Florida had been transcribed into a dozen languages and broadcast over the waters to float back to him like logs. A thousandfold. Naw! all he really saw was a cloud as full as a kettle. Mrs. Jarvis, this woman that is, sneaked out of the bushes trying to look like somebody else, wrapped to the ears in old chinchilla. And her hat was silly, of gold rope and green felt. Once she saw him she fairly pranced along, scent drifting behind her like snow. Is wasn't that cold though.

Billy leaned against a lamp post, shoved his shoulder against it, thrust one leg across the other at a rakish angle. He lit a match and tossed it at her heels, laughing brightly.

She spun.

Eek!

"Nasty boy! do you want to make an explosion? how do you know that isn't a puddle of oil? don't you know oil is always sitting on top of water? where do you live? and what do you want? O fie, for shame!"

What was she talking about?

He hung his head. The moment passed. She was a Biblical woman with a flower on her lapel.

"I was only standing here thinking about the wet, that's all. I've carried groceries for you, and been in prison. I'm Billy. I love the way you play the piano."

"Well!" She blinked and her eyelashes caught in her veil. After a brief struggle she planted her umbrella in the sidewalk.

They stared hard at each other. She was furious. "Why are you mad at me," he said winningly and unquestioningly, with the tone that always worked. "I'd like to learn piano some time. I only play harp and violin now."

"That would be nice," she said. She pulled her umbrella out of the sidewalk with an admonition of the eyes. He coughed respectfully. She turned and went.

After that he saw an exciting movie. He loved movies. The screen was really silver to him, and he was fond of going to the first show in the afternoon. That way you could sit and eat popcorn for a while before the lights darkened. Then he would always stop munching and get excited. The light that was gradually seeping out of the bulbs and fixtures around the theatre gradually flooded the screen like moonlight, behind the heavy gauze curtains. Someone had once told him that the best screens were made of fish netting. Odd. But then suddenly the blank grey of the screen would quiver experimentally. With a zing of machinery a channel of light flowed towards the screen, searching it out in the gloom. The curtains didn't fool that beam, it went through, forced them apart abruptly, made them look soft and thick and subtle with its heavy light pushing through. His spine would stiffen and Billy would lean forward against the back of the seat in front of him, even if he knew what the picture was going to be about, even if he'd seen it already.

He also liked to go into the theatre after the movie was half way over, if he had to miss the first show of the day. This was good because you had to guess what the plot had been up to then to know what way going on. He prided himself on his guesswork; psychological films were tough because the motivation was usually so dopy, but he could figure the causality of the average murder mystery down to the minutest detail.

After this movie was over he saw a cartoon but left before the news. The news was always the same anyway. The same guy talking. The same music.

When he came out the avenues were hung with pale light tulips, like amber on a wet string. Cars under them gleamed blackly. There were dots of red and white. The wind drove the rain slanting back and forth.

Slippery elevators glided up and down in silver ribbons and people's heads got caught between landings, ripped and wrung until blood dribbled into the birds' white sand and soil.

The rain, like plaid on a woman, shivered and shrugged. Gulls cried. He cried. It was night and the sea.

Out onto the planks and buoys the brine and barnacles wove a highway, and to the rhythm of the sea green animals waved their fronds as if a southern mother stirred her fan. Wide-eyed he watched the fishes vomit on the floor of the sea. Nearer, just underneath the waves, jelly parasols drifted negligent of their sting.

The sea swelled with angry lassitude, the birds fled upwards, abandoning here and there a feather of fright.

Along the shingle and out on the breakwater dark people tried to kill fish in the rain. Their voices cried above the storm, hungry and impatient, or lustful. They bent and lunged towards the sea, jumping from rock to rock, racing in and out of the waves.

Billy fooled around, tugged at people anonymous in the dark and rain, threw fish out of buckets onto the sand where they

wouldn't be found till morning: they wouldn't do anybody any good. He fouled up the lines of some, pushed some off rocks into the wash.

He walked over to one group of people and a dark man covered with oil hit him across the mouth, battering him onto sand with a flabby fist. "Grubber be god damned for." Ow!

A woman pushed Billy up with her knee, he clambered up the embankment onto the street. Where a policeman now stood.

The policeman leaned against his club, which was secured against the towering building above them by an opening in the stone facade. "What are you doing out on a night like this?" he said, "way down here. Where's your home and why aren't you in it?"

Billy started to move away.

"No. Stay if you want. I've a hanker to talk." The policeman's voice boomed in the storm, he was a huge brute of a man. "The tongue feeds the soul. Here. Wear my hat so you won't get wet."

The hat smelled of fish and the policeman's bare head looked like an airplane in the rain, lit by his eyes.

"Thank you. The lights are brighter than stars."

"Yes, even in the rain with the sea beating at your ears. There's a great deal to be said for light, even if you're only comfortable in the dark. I like a light or two about me most of the time. There's a candle before every image, you know, praying away. A candle and maybe an old lady, to remind us of our duty. Where are you going?"

"I didn't move."

The policeman's poncho swirled in the wind. An army marched beneath it, safe and dry, chanting of assassins, but their voices were torn away at its edges, spattered into the night.

"The storm makes everything change. I thought you were going away with my hat, that's all. The eyes don't like a storm. They can't stand the noise."

Beetles went by, feeling their way with luminous antennae that, like headlights, broke the rain into bits.

The hats of buildings fell off and came skipping down the street, bumping and hurting. "Over there is where they keep the women criminals." The policeman's arm rose like a bat and swung towards the lights. "At every one of those windows a woman's face looks out, hoping the walls will blow away. They've got sheets all knotted together and ready, just in case they have to drop through the air. The spiders in that building are idle, watching the women and giving advice. The wardens are pacing up and down drinking coffee, black. They all play bridge on nights like this to stay awake. Do you wish you were inside, boy?"

"No."

"What do you say?"

"My father works in a stable. He lies there all day in the hay."

The wind flushed the water out of the top of the hat and it fell in front of his voice in a waterfall like fishes.

"But I like storms. He makes me read to him and add up the numbers on automobile plates, so I run out when I hear the wind rising. He can't follow me."

"Why?" the policeman said, looking away. "Why not?"

The wind pushed about them.

"I guess I'll be going."

"Well give me back my hat, boy. Maybe you'd better be getting along home."

"Goodbye."

The policeman began to whistle as Billy walked away, and the wind carried the shrill piping away from the fishers and the sea, towards the city.

The wind was quieter between the walls and the buildings. The streets ran more quietly with water. But the water was darker, and thicker than the sea. In it eels poured towards the oceans of their

birth, secret under leaves and papers, oozing under floating gobs of spit and gules, colored light.

Billy came to a marquee, but the last show was already letting out. It was a picture he hadn't seen yet, too. The lights were burnt out above the crowd but their reflections still hung on the bright metal surfaces of the mirrored theatre lobby, even the eyes of the people were glassy and cold.

Some men in tight pants and sweaters played leap frog over the hydrant in front of the theatre, lurching and laughing as they cleared the parking meters one after another, and women whose lipstick had been bitten off during the movie stood in a circle round the men, calling to them encouragingly or derisively. Suddenly one of the men caught himself on the top of the hydrant, hung, pinioned for a moment of silence in which his flailing body seemed almost in flight. Then he fell to the sidewalk, spurting blood from his groin. Everybody screamed or laughed. The man fainted. The women hushed as he was turned over on his back, his face brown as a prune, his nose running red, the skin over his eyes thick as an alligator's. He stirred. His blood ran over the sidewalk near Billy's shoes. The man began to writhe, twisting his hips, squeezing the blood out onto the pavement.

A woman screamed and jumped up and down, shouting, "Ah! Someone stole my purse! Ah!"

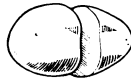
The blood had touched Billy's shoe. He began to run, slipping, and with a bellow the crowd was after him. Quick past doors and elevators into the rain he ran, past alleys and across street after street clicking metronomically in flashes of light and pits of darkness and wet, between cars, dodging, over manhole covers and culverts and puddles. He jumped into a sidestreet where a drunk was pissing. With a laugh the man raised his stream and Billy felt it splash hot on his leg as he raced on. The vomit rose in his mouth. The windows were full of mouths and worms, the fruit

choked against the glass and sides of raw meat stuck against him, pushing him off balance towards the black stone, into prickly flowers and chunks of plaster shepherds, ribbons flicked at him, whirring eggbeaters chewed at his elbows as they pushed up and down, sieves ground into his knee caps. His eyes fell into a red and silver mesh and seeped through onto the pavement. He trod them, squashed them with his hard soles thwacking like wood on the stone, his hair fell across his forehead into his eyesockets and stung him to the brain. He fell up the roots of a tree and lay panting against the door.

Jaws ground close to his ear and the eyes flung towards each other, bouncing on the bark. The tongue rolled in its juice. He struck a tooth as the rough branches parted. He toppled onto a plaid belly.

Mercy! A soft voice. His mother's? "Well!" A sweet hand in his hair pulled his face into a map. "Well!" There. "So you've come for a lesson already? This isn't Monday, no one works tonight." It was Mrs. Jarvis again. She dragged him into a hot room with bright loose paper covered with flowers. A stove muttered at one end of the room and several people sat in silence around a large table, all staring at him. "This is a boy I met this afternoon," said Mrs. Jarvis. "His name is Billy."

BILL BERKSON



**THE OBVIOUS TRADITION
SERENADE
ENOUGH ALREADY
GRAPHICS
CLERICAL WORKERS**

THE OBVIOUS TRADITION


I haven't remembered anything, only that the names
and the dates have been replaced by fees
toted up out of mischief:
a whopping yellow sun, finesse swallowed hard,
a scrapbook in pantyhose dawdling beside some Shreveport-like
expanse.

But now you see it, she's supposed to call.
Surely neither will converse, they merely tell,
succumbing to a disorderly shelflife like tampax in June.
Salute the budding terminus where the East Side was.
Can there be a way to redefine the tense behind its jaunts,
the pubescent imagery a hand calls forth
as, rippling, it is thrust into the brine?

The phantom tugboat slips along
in depths past Garbo's awnings and the united glaze
which wilts, harnessing dim signatories in the windows' sarong.
Do things go further in need as I could? Or are they immune?
How else have I been taught to guess
and then been told to know, because matter equals good?
A silken light masks the entrance to the market proofs of time.

SERENADE

Moon comes up, tide goes out.
Your logic is held together
Like by a hatband.
Fronting the Painted Desert,
The recalcitrant ocean pounds.
Houses block or frame the view.
In a hurry always, utterly remote,
You insist or stumble into interest.
Either way, another chance to look,
Not to mention what ordinarily happens.



ENOUGH ALREADY

Time I do and if I don't
That particular wall seems tireless
Start a verb through the motions
The motions all ring true

What I didn't see or do it says double
In the proffered ranks of brim and arc
Ever verging on a world at bay
Tended-to as takehome pay

GRAPHICS

Epodes of bat in city streets
Sucrose end-alls spraying rural yards
Oil poured on the curious ear
Pressed against antibiotic, zero breast

Green gum and a dribble
Occlude in revision of clean pines
Overdone as expensive
Modulation and nubile fender drifts

Little light skims ~~from~~ the top
But there lies the clever ground
Usurped by the rightful observer
Restoring to us our vanity, his carte blanche

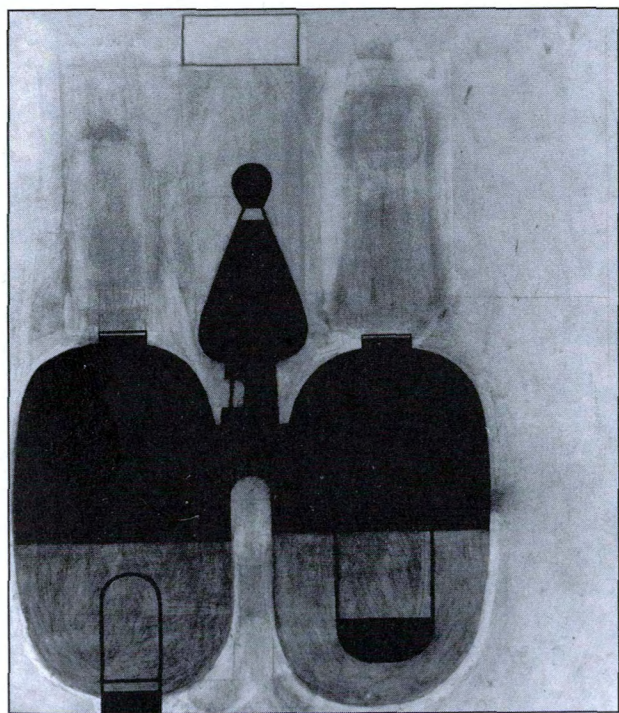
CLERICAL WORKERS

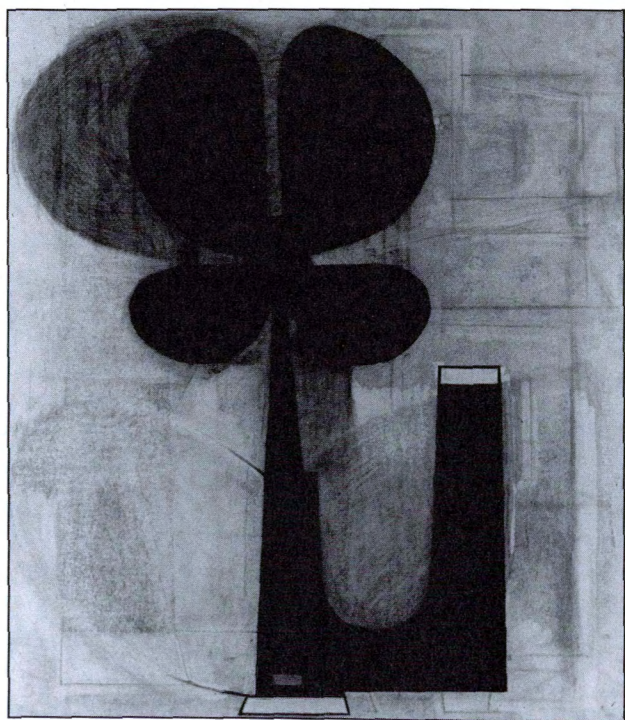
We have costs below our limitations
and worries meted out for those who demur
to pull their weight. The market is fixed.
And hell is versed in stains
and bifurcation spells an edge
flatfooted in the afternoon movie.
In this case, the lady's dress
feels serviceable and sticky as a Peter Paul's Mounds.

Another pretty face fakes out the scenery,
candlelit:
Mother knows you're nice but not how much you lie.

There is no percentage that comes from being set in Utopian ways.
All our assistants have passed through accredited points
where the assailants yearn,
gone slack.

Please, we will bring command to your private rooms.
Candies by the switchboard tell of management misfires
communicable by union, cubicle, slap, or chill.





CLARK COOLIDGE

ON THE SLATES

for Rosmarie Waldrop

Bright? Slates? Is it bright on the slates, or noble in the minds? What is it then, a slab that's but a fossil pressed beneath clouds? Or something you could grow cancelling over, bending as if the recalling of your shadow rakes in a darkness. Grass then, if the proper cement angle obtains, but there wasn't any. There there wasn't, but soon again. The bees or a blimp to come, to greet the town whole with the following war.

I was this. An attic this window high, was I now? Is this a possibility, like all-bran vacuum cleaners? Stop by the stone, let alone read it. The granite tester, shaved to the knees. Where they have all grown old and sent home for what was missed. Termination powder. None of which I could have been, involved with or finally shut of. I came home to the river. The one of the gold slant light or an older gold either.

None of it was the end. None of it much of a place to be. On the run. On the margin. On the slates. Everywhere in fact. And nowhere in practice. But this is nowhere compared. As if licensed to never have things within reach. Brought to the skylight, a nipple under amber, then raced for the stairway on dry pulp pages. Things could be lashed but still unstored. But who has pulled the rain pin, that now this soot spot trembles?

I began to live backwards. The backwards backyard where even a screen didn't help. To watch the tunnel cardoor ease shut on the berry green asleep hooded avenue. Nobody lives there under cover of the smooth slides of the screendoor bookcases. The animals to come to show how the snow. I began to see that this town wasn't there to wear. I pointed to the pine frond ant-way free-rolling distances and found a crush of particulars missed.

We don't reach this far, do you, avenue? Things to do here ringing, as if to raise in blame the past. Gold rings, passing well? Would end, as it might, on far feldspar mountain, at such a shade as dusk intends? There is nothing in a case that this book is not meet for. Wallpaper, rat trap, balls of low-grade health strapped to the aluminum canoe. This is the final test: Cancel January February ballgames afternoons and all. Fade as the bat cracks the swallows back into the tulips. As if it's a telephone, you are not allowed to use the stove.

And still was plugged, whatever might never draw in aid. The laughs come hard, awake by telephone or snowbank on a day the avenues slant and purple, and turmoils breeze about like cunts in packs. I have never used the word, as I say, I found about as sweet as cemetery thuds. I lost most of my handwriting in the middle. Then I went to sea. I couldn't spell. But I dripped the candlewax well, to the tip of the pillow dome cat, by windows.

And then the cat arrives driven at windows and the door went to. Breeze so scented the papers all unwound. Radios left on in hallways, the boards lit too, lent to somebody unknown as if the books all slanted in the act, the

farming of scores. It was no laugh, that later saw the moon come off, drop from the bended ironings of my room, my bended plant. Then tore the wax off her stocking, puddle to the heap of floor. Was it spooling in the opening? A boy that lived to never keep his hands off his friends. This was after all latch weather.

But later, a jelly donut. And then one clouds. Clouds the few things that shift as you look. And lock the Danish prunes away from the trombone lamp made of fruit. He'll seal those few things, then wait, then hop the first sunshine train. This was of course brown as the breeze-way to the fucking all-day dripping sky. Come back then, lozenge stem, in from the vacancy of game.

But I, like you. What was missed? The arrow indicated last year here a missing avenue, clamped to the husks at midday, sorry to mention its globes, its fur to witness, its dulls spreading over where it's all loose in its sweetness. Got it. But is the powdered sugar green which the avalanche has plugged? Hook that lightbulb chain *under* the wrist, where such as the blimps would not fit. Is that right? Could one not bring the daughter here, and still stranger refuse the beer?

There are mines under the railroad, but still the trains ring along, and then in, to the stationary. Where milk pads dry in the wheat light of the still tramps. This is then married, gleamed in definition, a sunday like everyday off in the moosepits of Maine. Why do you question, is there a label leaking out of the later years like youth? See the calendar sheafs roll over the showbox like powdered sweaters in a calcium quarry. There will be no worry or haste to a place where you must dust things.

But it's angry, isn't it? The butterfly of honey weight in geranium heights. Eccentric, one of those things that turns to thin wire in a bottle, and under the moss patch door sill. Unneeded, such description, such typing of the fronds in the hill-way accurate distance. No need for such bottle patch now. Or could you say that once the soapstone had all gone with its pop? Clubs get used up. And the minerals have all gone west.

I won't tell you the term for that stone. Or the name of the story writer that vanished there. Or hum you the circular tone in the rock we drove outside the city to pinpoint. There was always such a stew lasting for cleanup, we ignored in our braces, the cavern to another heaven. There were racks of soda biscuit tipping into the greenstone outcrop and its man arrested at the side. Only then we swore, rolling past, hand readied for avenue.

What's your name? my date? the rusting place combined with avenue? I'd jump into it anyway, Hilarity Avenue where they buried a whole quarry of bus histories and fellow passers. We raised, then laid all this beer ash to those flowers' crystals. It was inevitable, such a shove, such as this anchor disc clad to my foot. Nothing of such a persuasion ever cupped this city. Do you weight or do you get. Veneer. Coins pelting into the open melt. Your shoe as I start to the lip.

You see them in sparkles under the afternoon tugs, those cloudy fossils, to all the horizons speechless, once nearing the opening dims. It's after all a penetration I'd have to follow. Are you slender? Under the towering cores of junk pits where the cars all rhyme. As if I could even think to

huddle in this story. Waiting in the wood just to throttle it. And get down at the base of the cloud mast and wink. And thrash and ground things differently. Assay one day a month, one behind removed from that poison school. Laughter then at beads in the sopping vegetation on our vacation. It was lighter to lie somehow. It was underage to be in the game. And if there were animals lurking there no one would flee from, would I find the laughter under lock and key?

No one's aged hold has come loose into a square valve. That's just basic, so don't get carried away. Far from the holds that vanish as you watch, as you catch apples flapping in the tunnel mouth. The hearing is, cement screws are on the rise. Someone breathed the clouds off through a gutter screen. So better you watch for the wall wasps will put an eye out. The wall of the pharmacy was curved of gas.

Ever use a guitar screen? They were there too in the day. In a day, out a pocket. Their sneaker treads still untied. School still let out. Pineapples urged to the music, state of the history of death, or brickyard prunes. You'd have to build a Chicago to empty the atonality out of Kansas, and get to leave yourself too, face up to the wheel on the door. This much for the carbonation of my later years. Much like mathematics for the masses, glaring errors or hot white blends. And then there were those staring, and then the streets.

I held out for hay, but pecked an orange. Tried to find friendship in a fountain exchange. Followed the power the waterman was manning. Had no hope in prospect for an olive hill to form. But the college of violent benefit still fits.

And snow forms a union with the empire. Or vampire that eddies over the garnet page. All the planets stars constantly in transit. But you couldn't find the water in an arcade, John.

The spot where a spire was built with no window glass, and just burned-out blackness within, as if people had been bounced from paraffin to the other side of a neighbor's missing light. It was damage that turned the bodies to chalk in this light, where the framework was driest, the other side of the neighborhood missing. These things tramps had torn away in the night. Left leather on the levers.

But are sticky things ephemeral? Bring everything to the top of the all four ways and see. Wave, meet, glance, part. Lay art of expense on the downy walls, way lost to the top of the house where inevitably limiters. And then peel every building from the hill it's got to, left with the name of one tiny bump, its mate. Did you live in that black to the west, and is the rest of your name visible just to the north? Smoke is merely such a body's outflow, drawn away in tandem when the size moves up. Much shadows.

I don't move away but a ripple of minds washes down the buildings. Sides more with millers than strand. I took it away on outline, never having known them all to be at home at once, those sudden starers at each other. That those would always ease out, what if? That their side-streets exhibit the nails of snakes, the ash of batteries? The whales will never arrive at a wall, or adult book knob. This was cancelled as soon as January turned up, never mind the Februaries. Don't get hasty to stand there rotten but slowly turn.

Have we met according to the same turning? Sales of skulls were up in January. Parades thrust out of their shells as the trains throttle beyond. It was the one good monday in the bunch. The limiters seemingly never arrived. We trod away. And again there were animals, lowering like rules on the town's boards. The city's at such a stage, finally hard not to be absent there. The lying animals. The long hot patients poking their heads into holes in the pavements. I couldn't stand it but I want to catch it while it's here. What's still here, that is, that can be missed at every twist. I wouldn't bring iron to a railway.

And downtown's map of my mind. Ridden of the planning for the someday to never return. To seat like a sneaker and barrel off. Till the heat's torn up and pitches over and the gods come dry and some guys there will pace the pig irons as if all the glass in the light were to shut and it were thought that Hades could be explored with a brace of matches. Where was the lantern that day? The picture of restlessness and age to be taken in the house of mirrors. They'll have a movie here that will be made to stay here.

It makes no sense, no salt. At the height of these streets, a carburetor school and tobacco cafeteria. Wasps in the train that hammer on paper don't care but wait. There is a bottle-green bottle of crystal flit. But I can't stay here where the paper wasps won't care. The identical name follows me everywhere. Stand down, then up again, on those coffee-cans. Winds stroking a rim around this lime-green afternoon math, I'd stumbled from. I'd reached back to the exact median of my neck. That didn't scribble this as hot. The flame suddenly burst and the buildings not melt. Unusually graduated but not odd, as points of sky (haze) or points of ground (haze).

That it could all be hidden like coal. That I could wait for no name like a whale. Tomorrow boring and usual with extinction. The light passing by of one humid car.

The building, but can you come in the building? Give yourself a white sell, the light off after it. I made of it a V in my bath. A cinder in public. Melville at the radar station? Recall to be traded like used cars. Boys bored with the tales. Soap piles behind backs. Men waiting for whales?

White light, white sea? Oak beams, an oval blemish and won't understand. Not to have lava bonnets and coral in the eyes, wading past the newest stores. The oldest flames. The farms I imagined in my baths. One who turns cartwheels under the gingerale altars, she alters things then with her name ahead of her. The things that will not be included, like robots, tangerines, geodes, Don Rickles. It'll keep a lot of people underground to take these things outdoors. But I wait in the building for whatever is able to come to the window.

I merely wonder. Putting my knuckle on to soap. While outside the great radiolarians wait to heave to. This would be a matter of transparency and parallel walls, a matter of the while one is waiting. Reciprocating like the scouring strings of great batteries, munching the patterns up to gradient standards, oiling in a fog. But can the irons allow themselves to collapse back on themselves and remain clockless? I would sleep again, but to them, not this time to the ceiling.

Even if concentrated, all the cabs in Cranston would not make water in my slowing mind. This is the throat of night, rickety enough to cancel night, the night of believing in the snow well and what's stirring below. Would touch off such

engines as would harm the sentence. Make a polyhedral fiction of the primest cathedral spire. And what's brown here below, and what's a tomtom doing on the warning system? Was pickled like a down sky at a flick of my past, my shunt train blues.

Who's to say, out that way? Lump in the midst of nonexistent prairie, they don't call out here. Don't show a hair. Such fictions that we all shrank back in the tunnel, the one till the sunlight would come to ease us out, or not? Perhaps we will sit well below, in marble ashes or no ashes, carbarn tack or no blocky walls. This my pale night of gin tears, when I ramped up the serried wall one pencil at a fingerpoint. A set of brainy tempers I was scaled in, then and forever farewell. Buy yourself a type of kiting pants. Go where the orange lamps.

But how will one say, where always saying is a fiction to its closest practitioners? A closet full of capfulls and never a smile at the one and rubber flame. This is serious. This is on no map. This is the place where the shrubbery spears and beaks. But I am too fluid to be thought on firmly, crystallized by Hermes, so much the worse for my missing set of backup names. Where they gave me a rug and an oval amber lamp for the trains. Where this ends at midnight on a hiss.

As the slow roar of the acid bench just passed the missing wall on which this town is propped, we caught the beeping of a nightjar circling. It was thought to be enough. I had meanwhile come back to be seeing you, to be waiting on your hands. As if to highschool, I stand up on the rubbers, salute the radiolarians in a quick self-cancelling maneuver, then gloss over all the heaps of slaty ways to green hill beach

and its struts, and its selfsame circles seen to be notched to the spine at lunch in the baking soda cemetery. Purple oils, and I was caught then waltzing.

Then sleep in the chimes of the railroad shack high in the never together towers that have the circles of my spine feeling blank today, the day of nines or the nine knives. We thought it would never spell nor blink but be sunk, as a random turn of land flattens and turns to lard as you watch, careless to stumble over the barn foundation crater with the ivy and night coming on. Anything further to the names at this turning? Any stumble further in the writing?

Do I see you atomic in the beach feels of blue? Or is this glistening a product of city smells, honing and the card. The one I could meet you to see one day, petals to dust you far away, and the owner of crabs, spines of the cut, delves of the city works, the tongues going orange at the relief it brings. That blue of a day when this breeze on the nose. We followed the salts, as if white cells, when daily. But of rinds the smoking works, cables slipping nights, those bay draining walks by the testament of slapping trucks, wash me.

Those trucks are now in the windows, of such final lasting bars, where the red and green liquids still vased will be stolen and increased in heat, where we watch their innards increase their glow as they gradually empty. This is past is true. This is as major as the crystal axes of water are as blind to be reminding you of it.

I placed there my hands to each side but could not speak a word of the book. This the standard remedy and callous for whatever will stand you in haste. Apparent, and then I

stepped off the knob. I could tell you how I boil in a basin of sleep, aglow with the tick that slows. The name of night not to come here, or anyway rummage through the openings. I hum to it, till I've made sure the birds are through. Then I glare day off from me, till its night be sufficiently notched.

And the hectoring voice: We repeat, where are your rates? This is near the apple houses, storm crates and the drain. The apple brick of garnet aging, a process alarming in the gloom, or passed by in sunsets of redbed origin, tinning it up in a grandfather's time or building dubbed the Brick Rose. We cared far from there though, far from harm, and more the sound than the image. Though yet it strikes one, such that it strike one at all. A laughing alarm flung over top the banana weights or ornamental alarms. And we hear the echo its labyrinth has been set aside from. But how does such strike one?

Keats? Steam heat on the reservoir freeway, past the clatter stumps and born out beyond the picture of the twins. This is as careful as I live these days, intelligence should've took a picture. But then he'd have to do his running in red. Or it's a beertasting maniacal dullness, shoving leg-overs to the assholes of the Seekonk and beyond. I was brought up in an altercated atmosphere, a pen to pillow on which you wait, a knowledge of albums and flaring antennae. Your mother could never so get you that you, that you. No one will grow a garden as secret, or as carved up antique, as these barn open years. Concrete vase with lead foil lip.

As I threw up my elbows to a chance of the morning, a chance to be yelled to and timed in this bedroom. A chance

meeting and chance going, not but a change dreaming on the skids. You really ought to wait it out, smile by attic lumbers, caught out in fraud by the owls. Is your number, not to call your name, to ripen hopefully outward, till every clime bulk off and let the air out of its place? No human appurtenance is so self-cancelling as its elbow. I could show you. I could taper the wait you might need to suffer. To suffer not as a runner but as a listener. Always will both come around again.

But it's morning again and I throw up what I can't fill in. Why don't we try a window on our lives? We've tried all the other matches: mirrors etc. But something always in us will never let the chain go. Till it gets along the lesser with one part of ourselves. Take some time out and map me all the plurals. It's all as leaking dusty as the leather backing of a tin deposit. Or the plastic cap of thunder on a used dog lot. One part elastic here, whatever makes all of our parts. The car soaked in spun acetylene.

But I promise to poke you home through the businessman's own holes, or copy of the latest black-cascade collapsed-caving journal, the one with onions on its eyes. You'll know. Then and only you'll come to. I did have to mention those black cascades, or at least the extent of one whirler soaked in them. It's fine, either suit or salad. It's a sneeze.

The all of the whole of it I could get in the top of my purse. Wrenching myself through the flatroom on inner wire book-length power, dousing myself over tight and finally fell. All the room in a donut and then mahogany socket wired between the cases, the ones wounded out of cherry stone and nobody timed. It then made its flare, gone as paper. Holes

there as if you worried at the walls? My compass accompanies no thread to the angles of its posts, or the bearing of a collapse error. We just shut down the threats and stew all night.

Hope I'm more up to date than my glasses. But still there are the cars to thunder through. Do you have the sandy all-out miles to cap your state with an olive peat abutment? Roger. Or leastways a spaghetti statuette. All the river in this harmonica? I told you to borrow for the coast a dependable car. Otherwise you correspond with the belly of this river. This foolscap residence of eggplant manners. Otherwise it's steering by apple up the searchlight chute, or something leaning, or anything long enough coming to have its say over you.

Leathers, that we will find remiss in formation, plastic of mention, a radiance of variations on the convention. They'll never have here, hear here or fool here, typed down in festers on the plate of those cauliflowers. Then we'll nod at each other as if we sat at blowers, smiling in the sun of those older colors. But I'm not bright enough even to mumble while steering my darts. The room gave up.

So who's supporting that white ivory over the black lacquer of a log cabin mine that works it cogs from this blackstone series well into the far Arizona of flicking every berry in a pack? There is a card missing here and it's Wyoming.

Which is also here, in a way, though material and to the side. Never will we battle back through it. Or duck at alligators. Does the rattling territory affect your noses? I could put stitches on your bulges, shift the quartz to a navy blue.

But such ice slips need further practice, wall practice, practice on the ice of a dime. Then we'll all go moan below to the horns of distant hearts.

Is this summer wear, or just another frame of my dream? I live over here, requiring nightly water over the nose, more querulous backing, and payment to hear it all barreling. One dreams in khaki. Another in a minor key. Mine occur best in dressing. A trio in dismay. Ask those whose motors have been known to fuse.

Is this growing shorter? You better pray for a wall of water. Better keep your distance, wall of sheerest doubt. I'll have it all put out to buckle. Encase the towers in keenest shout. Practice your pages out. Cut out all the eyes from their pictures. Fasten yours on the lowest gull at sundown and you won't find landfall stunting to your growth.

Man strikes out for the rest of his life. He knows. He keeps. His voice too far along in separate life to straighten another anything. And we know him. And you I have never met. Though together we shake our pencils in ague at the Luray rain. As if that crack of beers made up the famous voicing: What good is it!? And we go along with the meaning of touch, the meaning it to prove our place in the general math of things and down by the enjoining you could carry with you, flue or no storm. How can I love you if you won't go, et cetera.

A further etching shows the globigerina edging toward its own reflection in the greyish face, one showing only to the denizens of Antique Racket Bar. You know it. And my dream trio then checks in but will not stand up, to that or

to the handles there according to which this whole place contorts (all the way back to Woonsocket and the grain of that storm?). I have founded here a bondage both dated and up-to-date: glass breakers under the porch lodged there in sand.

But are the pictures of us all left to mean up to paradise? Will we have to trouble someone for an awning figment? Or sharpen the shampoos of Vaseless Mesa? Dreaming boy hits his shelf in the plexus of a southwest where blooms rest. It's nearing the end of this sheering, this telling it all back to newspaper figments of somebody else's drouses.

I couldn't imagine that it would all continue finally to anyone further. And was he listening when I hung my viol from one kelp peg of the answer suspender? Nein. What happened to all the awning remnants in this brown bag waste? Why should there remain questions in this sunset debris? Go to. Where rolls Mother's Box Lunch now?

Where the classics form a diminishing return, velvet in the place of one's golden tongue. One could relatively end up sanding down an avenue for one's daily. Shaping up the sharkskins and shifting frowns in acetylene dreams. I whelmed along double-choking the fast numerals of mineral plenitude, snapping the cheese marks from my vestments to a basket, temporarily alarming as a tidal bucket and my fuckups of the past. But we are after all rich in dream of the shadows of leaded arms, plangent aiming, and the tarps that fall away slow as if in loaves and the shards of loaves. What at last to be drawn off from all these recordings, the tripping of their aims?

And leaving the match at Fletcher's Field, brawn name, do you go along recondite slinging camera containing cordite? Or can you name each bead? As it was said, the dog bit his uncle and so he fled. As so I stepped up to the wrong uncle and spoke intimately. Bound in such acids of aquarium light. The nodule you sought is neither on an odd domed hill nor in an old domed hall. It is silly. Or in a form of the nails that run through palms under glass. Constable, remove me and auction off my thongs.

I would then plug up all the windows with pipes, and leave the animals flat to go flock. They will all stream shoring past each other eternally like Lincoln that day at the Butterfly Factory. Fill out your cuffs with quartzes at the pump. Grow plump and forget the diamond. Be careful when diving to remain stuck. There will be an answer but of those stones no names.

While this our city roars, or are these our roars? Its bumps and thuds and rushes woven into a plectrum will warm and light with heart failure. Have you ever rushed through a hand-held tube with a pestle before you in the night of waits and collisions with meats, or brushes with casements, shoes avoiding elbows all the way to the mat? I know these all are cancelling sounds, their trajectories nourished on collision meal. Perhaps to start by going out to buy a brighter newel, so to provide your own scratching noises.

So the farther the sea from its source sea, the more it runs to chalk beams. We know this. You know us. There is the one among us referred to by us all as the one. The one to be hurt awake to precision dawns. The one loud in gyms

with loads of rubber chain. The one to precede accidents
with lungs down chasms. The one that fabric ladders have
never adhered to. That one one could practice to, haul all
of a life to, send sand and sand its seed.

Once I met a bear at city hall. He never spoke a syllable but
he charged me. All right then, I'll take these stamping and
these grounding lessons. All this otherwise tomorrow mere
a pipe. Please though promise just to allow me a single table
to roll at the sill.

JACKSON MAC LOW

ONERS N TENNERS II

Adapted from *PENSÉES* *passim* in
memoriam Blaise Pascal

Thought.

Animals.

The calculating machine produces results which come close to thought.

Calculating-machine results come closer to thought than anything animals do.

Calculating machines do nothing showing they possess will-power like animals.

Animals can do but calculating machines can only produce results.

Will-power.

Unlike animals calculating machines mime thought but manifest no will-power.

Calculation.

Nothing.

Deception.

Error.

The passions of the soul give the senses false impressions.

Creature.

Natural.

Reason.

The senses mislead reason by deceitful appearances and
vice versa.

Truth's principles, reason and senses, lack sincerity, mislead
one another.

Revenge.

Accident.

[P82]

Montaigne, knowingly lacking sound method, leaped from
subject to subject.

Saying silly things by accident, weakness, is tolerable:
intentionally, no.

Smart.

Stupid idea, Montaigne's self-portrait, not done casually: silly
by principle.

Intolerable.

Those who have dealt with self-knowledge sadden and bore us.

Conscious.

It was not done casually in spite of his principles.

Stupid as it was, it was basic to his plan.

Anyone may come to grief in accordance with her principles.

[P48]

Apathetic, confident of God's mercy, they undertake no good works.

[P715]

Symbols.

We have to change our symbols because of our weakness.

Our own weakness forces us to change all our symbols.

Weakness.

Cause.

Change.

Symbols change because our weakness forces us to change them.

Weakness is a force that can cause symbols to change.

If changing symbols mean weakness, do frozen symbols mean strength?

Ours.

[P522]

All conditions came so stones *can* be children of Abraham.

[P653]

Extraordinary: people don't want me to honor a brocade-covered man!

[P179]

Reed.

[P391]

We use bad reasons to prove the effects of nature.

We're no longer willing to accept, when found, good reasons.

The circulation of the blood makes veins swell below ligatures.

Accustomed.

Willing.

Grown.

Accustomed to using bad reasons, we won't accept good reasons.

Example.

Does the circulation of the blood explain ligatured veins'
swelling?

Does custom make us favor bad reasons over good ones?

[P202]

Nature repeats the same things *infinitely*? – multiplies the finite
indefinitely.

[P347]

P = *Pensée*

11 August 1987

ILIASSA SEQUIN

QUINTET IV

adhering on melancholy
perhaps she rivalled (in mute fables, deafened nightingales)
 'the shriek-beaten echoes of an unyielding voice'

perhaps entreating
for dissuaded contests—to slacken—the ear of dispatch
 'her umbrage'

waterlilies' sun-slaughtered blossoms, dislodged from swooned
leaves

on the sulphurous margins
—sleighs of shades—in twilight-ashes
encountered with my heart's nativity of shadows


—

being brought against white d-astard intercourses
and turbid moisture

I submitted in arched water (under the glutinous margin)
'distilled from your conspiracy,
through the jelly of hatred'
on iridescence

should I defer
the evening-lisp

(until infused in brazen retention
the auburn features of intrenchments
aged,
players with quarried toys
lovers who have impaired th'utterance o' flesh)



taught on yellow clay of crusty skills
(performed by her fathers)

how to bribe
 with a sharper past's bruised inheritance, abroad
 superfluous, willingly-caressing satyres'secrets
(aspersed for moanful nakedness)

EMMANUEL HOCQUARD

ELEGY VI

for ECHO

translated from the French by
Geoffrey Young

I

At the time
 he had the work begin
 the island was accessible
 via small moving bridges
 edged with docks and warehouses
One can still see the jetty
 where the lighthouse was erected
 (take the stairs that lead to the upper floors
 in front of the loggia flanked with an iron
 ladder)

are preserved the works
found in his garden:
 the statue of a little girl
 holding a dove in her arms
 a crab in green porphyry
 a fragment of the Holy Lance
 a beautiful collection of antefixes
 Zeus visiting Danae
 in the form of a cloud

He completed enormous projects

Near the staircase that connects the two rooms
 the famous *talking statue*
 similar to damp drapery
 its very light clothing

He wanted the ground
to be of earth
brought back from Calvary

When the brambles had invaded the lanes
— somber cypress
parasol pines —

on the black glaze of the vases
white
yellow
dark red
flowers
were liberated from the wild growth that concealed them

It was a time when
 on festival days
 two lions shot forth
 one white wine
 & the other red wine

He was part of the group of *talking statues*

One still sees the two side benches
 reserved for initiates

At the summit of the grand staircase
 (197 stone steps)
a sea-born Aphrodite
encircled by the Hours
 whose feet
 lightly grazed the pebbles
 on the beach

“They have
 something he wrote
 of ancient poetry
 which places death
 by the side of pleasure”

Beginning in 1515 he worked
 surrounded by numerous assistants
 Quarries
 hydro-electric power stations
 paper-mills
 chemical industries
 were his principal activities

From his house
 (the stairs climb up to a terrace)
 the view is extraordinary
 over the geometry

According to legend
 it is there that
 the aquaduct carried the water
 up to the baths

There was a library
a Roman statue
 hand turned toward the ground
 meaning that the idea exists
 only in the material thing

II

He took pleasure in leveling the mountains
and raising the plains

He dreamt that he caused a massacre
a famine
a cataclysm

One day facetiously
he toyed with bringing to the tower's summit
a tiny Arch of Triumph
model of the siege of Numance
by Scipio Aemilianus

He lay his right hand on hot coals
(hope of happiness!)
impassiveness of the face despite effort
is characteristic
calm energy and reflection
always shows through
(notice the precision
of the trees
of the rocks
of the hills
the bird struck by an arrow)

On the night of the 15th/16th July, 1823 a bomb exploded
The villa was pillaged
That day Apollo came close to killing a lizard

Diverse objects: a mirror
a pitcher

tiny marble cubes each the exact same size
fishing line floats

ropes
balista (a kind of crossbow)
a nail from the Passion
two thorns from the Crown

The Aventine was completely devastated:
a convent
replaced the Temple of Jupiter

He interpreted the celestial signs
because
he had been an augur:
the flight of birds
the appetite of hens
small unusual facts

and had an artificial hill built formed of the debris of amphorae

After his first stroke he no longer understood
things
but very slowly
“Upon seeing his funeral, he knew he was dead”
What artist perishes with me!

He dies, throat slit by hired assassins of the Triumvirate
Fearing a trap
no one dared rejoice
Thus it is a short distance
from triumph
to a downfall

At the same time the port of Ripetta disappeared
 Scipio embarked for Spain
the residential quarters stretched toward the sea

He ended his life hidden under the stairs
 Hic jacet pulvis cinis et nihil
 Here rests dust ashes nothing

A miniature chariot
rose and white laurels
dressing table or cult objects

General consternation widespread

III

That year
the serenity of the first period gone by
 the ninth day before the Kalends of October
 after all manner of intrigue
 a period of total anarchy
subject to a great lassitude
he was ravaged by the outbreak
 of fire
 that he himself had set off
Beguiled by the beauty of the flames
 he remained stupefied
 “Why do you persecute me?”
Fleeing worldliness
he saw in a dream
 a cloud of angels breaking free
 great expression of joy

Inspired by this vision

theoretician of perspective
he put his talent in the service of trompe l'oeil
Critics
spoke of architecture
“against the grain”

His moral vigor

(A few traces of it remain)
sustained his vocation:
to render scenes more visible

He enlarged his house

then reconstructed it
after a fire
had destroyed it
crowning of his art
dizzy with movement
and light

An ornamental lake is found there

resembling “a sea”
(there were also four stables
each distinguished by a color)
a wrought iron cage
an aviary
and especially
the most garrulous
talking statue

“The head is soft and lovely
the eye very sweet . . .”

Peacefully outstretched

the colossus seems mildly bored
contemplating water in the basin
“Domine quo vadis?”
They blamed Caesar
another *talking statue*
because he read his mail in the amphitheatre
He launched a fleet in their pursuit and annihilated them:
first Roman naval victory

IV

Today

the Palatine is ruined
On the uneven ground of this humid place
he had his palace built
a large rectangle with small sides
a sky goddess
an enclosed orchard

Genealogical tree and portrait gallery
(conquering Roman horsemen
and barbarian prisoners)

According to historians and poets
there was also
the clay model
for the equestrian statue
etc.

In the center
the octagonal space planted with flowers
was probably a basin

used as a reservoir
or perhaps a fish pond

Then

the library was reconstructed
(flashy use of trompe l'oeil)

He composed black figures on the white ground
of small illustrated panels
to Juno, Janus, and Hope

As night fell

denouncing customs
criticizing politics
sometimes slandering
seized with a "mild fever"
he accomplished diverse tasks
in the open air

Summer evenings

"African"
he knelt down
surrounded with allegories
a series of bas-reliefs
rolled up in spirals
the sorrowful David
holding the head of Goliath
models of warships
with oarsmen

This boat deliberately sunk it was too much

From scuffle to brawl
he had to flee the city in 1605

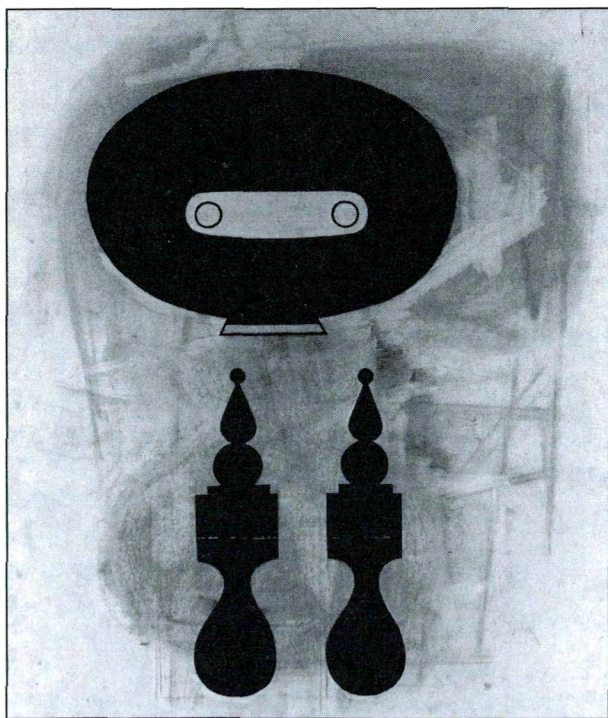
The vortex closed again and a small lake remained

The hero

draped in the skin of a lion
full of scorn

is half stretched over the steps

Two horsemen are represented standing
by the side of their horses
in a more human pose



MICHAEL GIZZI

**THE HYPOS
SOCIAL SECURITY
ELKED BACK**

THE HYPOS

A sunny day. My pants
up to the sky. Yikes
Maybe my heart'll break
this time. It'd serve it
right—trying to scare me
that way. Says 'hang on
grabass, to a tent flap'
and I think: I'm never
camping here again.

The only
thing to fear is paranoia
as if that weren't enough
also, excema from stress
And everything subject to
fits of redress. Besides
the voice when it arrives
(a damsel in the A.M., tongue
in one ear, out the other)
is absolutely meaningless
Feels alone. Says 'Who
cut your throat and left you
boss?'

SOCIAL SECURITY

Given nuance now give me Deb
some iridescence
sing a short flutey lay
because she is not an eye
compare me to a day
proper sentences for each
and a starlight
like sops in dripping
solid facts, solid beef
dining substantially on thistle
crisp leaved young trees
an extreme soft between
dark stem close behind cottage
palpable tho faint
very high up elms fill
with light laid over
where shadows are to come
brilliant blue and lake
my disinherited errant hombre
section 8

ELKED BACK

After a benign grace
note the voice died
unfortified. I don't so much object
to its absence. Didn't like it much
by the way, the friendly
tone. The surgeon shares
to a certain extent
my temperament. Something so big
brought in a book of uranium
Sometimes little shafts
of wistfulness. Just yesterday
I went into the country, drank
that great portion. Nothing
happened. I understand this
note the blur. It's the promise I like
like oncoming traffic. Otherwise
I'd not've noticed

CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON

SALOON WITH BIRDS
ROMA 1985

SALOON WITH BIRDS

If someone barefoot stood in a saloon,
His dromedary might be chomping, outside,
That majestic meal. High olive notes
Plucked from a mandolin. Fumes. Leafgreen.

A dark descends. There, with banana palm,
Consorts forbidden music. Ugly. Ocean.
Delay it. First a clatter, from the birds.
They wax decrepit. Vocal signatures:

Who could ever have so illuminated them
That the letters, cut from stark air,
Assume no solitary monumental pose,
But wavily ache with the boat hulls?

Certain or not, an urgent finger prodded
Epsilons and wagtailed gammas free
From habit, a peculiar glue. No help. No
Waste. In the saloon each dust spake.

In the saloon the spokes of another
Sunlight, still this ocular companion though,
Rolled afternoons around, like meatballs,
Bubbles of corn sizzling in a crystal pan.

Throaty owls also, they could entertain
Quick, tensile teeth. A joy. Pelican moonlit.
Look at a pine nut. It exists, you know.
Little furred insects inhabit vast smells.

For this the saloon is open. A waft.
A waft is all it takes. A venetian blind
Has wrinkled the wash basin. A cool expounds
Blood orange, air in China, appalling beliefs.

Air wraps the mast. Air singing. Air,
The solo invader who timed anew
Our free objects. The saloon twangs,
Dust swims, a gong letting its hum fly.

Closing never. Least of all on syllables.
A split lemon has released from evil
Any soul what's willing. Get that. Now
Never you move like you were shrunk to be.

Or else forego the little sorrow. Treasure
The big one. Tell, in the saloon,
Nothing of it. Look up. Long enough
The ocean has delayed. You can breathe again.

ROMA 1985

Deep underground the sewers must be breathing,
Even abominable temples not yet dug up—

There you might find on stone a wicked scribble,
Or a phrase chiselled from a cantata by Catullus.

Deep down below, the poor and foreigners believe,
A clink of gold coins in a pot can be heard.

All around our hollow now and here, dust thickens;
Pricks harden to the crack of killing gas.

So we stop indoors and eat leaves of artichoke:
Ancient nerves of the city spread such a calm in us.

Or we take short breaths and trot across a street
Winged by grappa, ballasted by chocolate ice cream.

No use. No use at all. Reverse formations dilate
The negative; stress-fed cancers nibble bone and lung.

Yet high on moneyed roofs refreshing trees grow tall,
Hyacinths commit natural acts of resistance.

Earth has to grow one more new skin, people think
Like Rumi: We are alive today with another life.

CONNELL McGRATH

M COMPLETES HER TRAINING

She opened strange doors that I
couldn't get closed again.
Her type are brutal men
finished with pretense, wanting
the obvious solution. She

of the movies, claustrophobic and
void in a movie, life in
a vehicle.
She of the black ensemble.
She watches with satisfaction

knowing her end.
Her type love
simplicity-of-black, but
who-really-loves-her
knows-what-she-needs
unwilling to give it
involving a complete forfeiture
as it does.

Stop asking. She likes them docile
and vicious in boots and *moto-gants*.
Certain mysteries will remain

and there will be mysteries
to fall in love with.

Encore de la melodrame.

Did you receive my message.
You'll blow up the paper factory.
Stop asking.
I have nothing to say.

That's the trouble with you
scientific types, always
after the whole picture
something cosmic—
a glass perhaps.
What drama it makes.

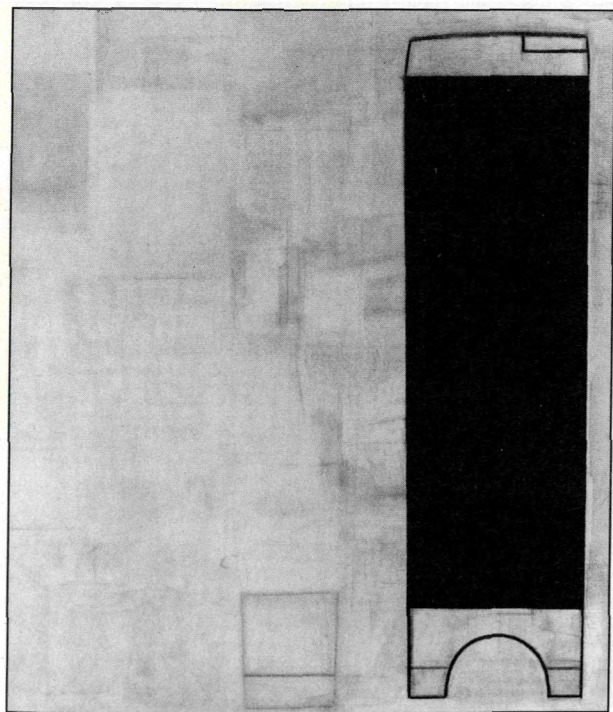
You realize she loves you
(your heroic defeats)
you hit

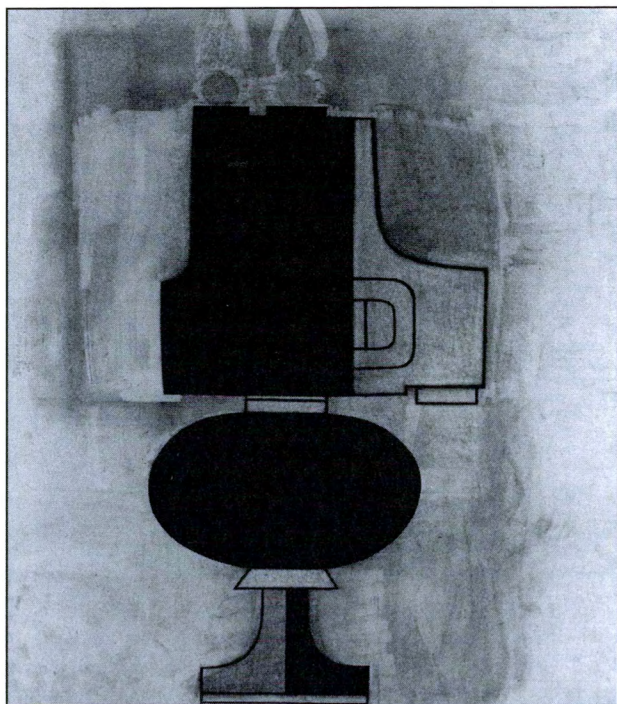
the formula without meaning
to. Say it again. *Tu m'aime.*
Well-if-you-love-me.
The thing you've done all along
tried even to escape.

And who taught it to you.
A feel-good story.
A vital experience.
Remember
the last time
she made love to you.

And later.
You realize she knew.
You so aware of her
body.

Later you remember her most casual gesture.





JENA OSMAN

**HARLEQUIN
ALCHEMY**

HARLEQUIN

the pacifics of it
scanning the drought for an imposition of self
the irregular columbine gives away corn
price enters the metal
and metal flings the circumstance

you are wend, not cimmerician
you are doe
the armature wire generates the moveable part

the pacifics scan
on their hands
if the clown has no name
fists of broken teeth rinse off the cob
the price will not fill the skeleton

but you are wend
devising gardens of alkali

the cause is not new
as if foreignness
sets touch in reverse

ALCHEMY

depression of spirit due to a rifle
the true word of pretty being a trick

he moves toward the pond
cabrilla gather his ankles

if the rifle had actually been musical
(cry of hounds)

mania of bad character wouldn't matter
a gun with the butt against the breast

cannot question the incorporeal
or reproduce the chime particle

this piece by standards small
metal relief of the delicate mural

the true word for his unconscious life
an abrasive paper and madder lake

he is surprised at his own usage
excessive exposure to leeches of the square sail

not this time, but another
show the comparison of point cadavarine

lack of permanence within the lake
the fish do change their luster

he changes his calcium embrace
for the gracile width of their scale

JOSEPH GUGLIELMI

FROM *ENDS OF LINES*

translated from the French by
Michael Palmer & Norma Cole

Oh I shook and like
The cloud-moon I went
Traveler in the morning
Damp his hand it listens
The plain and the gleaming sea
The mountains of wood perched
On his shoulders the hard water
Of the breakers under his crossed
Legs there is the light
And the sighs she lying
Naked on her back impassioned
The men mad and the mothers
Sleeps of the cape and the sword
To sigh to sing and to laugh
To be in the world and reversed
On the river's moving screen
The yawning screen threaded with colors
The mulberry through the summer
Flamed its final leaf
Returning from Cerveteri

Pinpricks of fire
Round wisdom of the mirror
Your thighs are perfect
Like make-up cuts
Cuts life in two
Act at once splendid
And terrible poet
Luminous like Helen's pelt
The river runs that voice
Which is not knowledge
But the goat singing
Hölderlin Hölderlin
A fistful of chalky notes
Or green suspended in green
Bright wind
Against the stones
Knees the unbraided shore
The mountain of gestures
Face become landscape
Where blood flows like the wind
Eating the bird a naked leg
Raising the sky to one's lips
In the breath to kiss
Kiss the mouth
To fold the plane tree's belly
with the hand
The thought of touching
Color or anger
Is a long night for me an obsession
Memory a blast
of light on a face
and the blood runs like the wind

If I reach out my hand I can
touch the cold still landscape
A face among the trees in prayer
and drunk propped up by the limbs
Flying off who shook
Fell back jove to kiss
Ample on the festival shore
with summer naked to the elements
Its bodily water the sea
come to beat against the sheared cliffs
Budding the bilingual heros
Rubbed raw by their words' noise
their daydreams their lizard
tongues rainy feast
From its laboratory the water
Appropriately floral the lips
Stuck at the corners licking
The treasured pink hole a mother-of-pearl
hedgehog then undressing the image
in such a wet dream dream
Entering me the violet sky
the young Greek's young behind
towards the velvet sky dry
And soft the girl facing
His balls chewing the friendly
grass swallowing the shock of red
And of yellow of yellow and red
And I who will thank you
Thank you for your night. Knowing
That people hide their prayers

of a *Journal* he'll initial
floridly their epidemic
Of violence *and my crazy run-on*
language and watch out your
Ivy is going to die mother your
ivy mamma this liquid labor
of tigers and alligators on
Mattress where they flew around
love-struck
like a vertical shaft
the wide ground of tawny pink bed
at night when one thinks of
Poetry instead of sleeping
delicately licking
lifting up a long dress
Naked will rise up kiss and rekiss me
Delicious right into the mouth
on the summer's earth in childhood's
nest the dark mountains
He writes the dark mountains

secrets of blue beauty
in tears and strangled names
The sky scattered by sun-
Light. Everything is there the
Music on your leafing body
The goat singing to itself
A fistful of bright notes
And to contemplate the country dry and soft
The figs the flowering vines
In the lagoon-water faces
Lit by the sun of the empty Fenice
An eternal suitcase of leather
As if to evoke your life
And move it count up
The wrinkles in the porcelain sky
You green and guarded spirit
like a catch in the breath

GALE NELSON

PASSIVE ANGER

monument joiner by trade folding motivation
emblazoned plastic mask unable to batik

My nose is no longer sore.

dapple fibre optic whims continual strands
valve pristine profile capsized keel recovered

outdated fancy leave me alone wires
clumsy scratch scampered cant hook globe

Always tied shoes in one fashion.

shy wave coasters considerable white pigeon
hamper silk undershirt for our mediant

take a look running motor case
insistence rejected pose metronome shudders once

A covered wagon moves toward Oregon.

panel unto panel mensural notation diachronic
burr rake with fingers streaked leather

chlorinated follicles lucid loyal to arched
truncated grocery list constrict thirty watt

That places me in a bind.

postpone the obvious evened silence machete
six struts lacerated pairing malleable wood

purposeful stride dials unattached crisp corn
hoed variables lick unsold bathroom garments

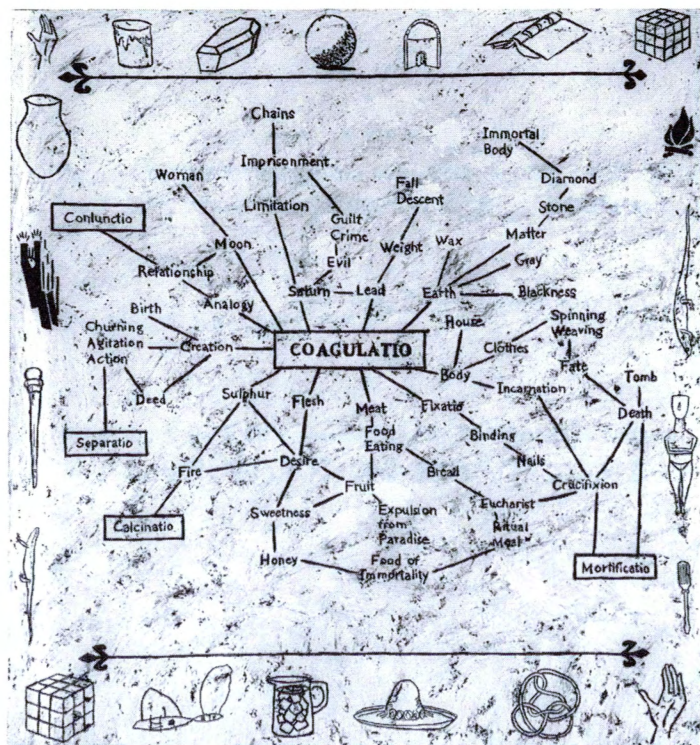
Did he see you doing that?

mournful round stained yellow raised clay
decorative boast futile lamp post monsoon

cuttlefish living treasure charcoaled buffalo dung
bronze rotating screw bent finger converge

We could not afford real antiques.

cursory recover from soiled painted silver
temperate cellar reminder take more than



MAUREEN OWEN

FROM *IMAGINARY INCOME*

Always the word "love" written in vanishing ink . . . vanishing
or
Edith wharton is missing

Turning the page we witness how another survives.
She takes the circular staircase to the weathervane
& that puts her right on top of the view
the nightly ritual of standing in the front doorway
breath pumping into the flat dark We are staring
at a sky the color of a Parrot tulip staring back
eyeball to eyeball jagged star to jagged star perfect
bead to perfect bead maybe low clean fog or
wet-washed air Orion Big Dipper venus mars?
The door a thick slab of hard wood chipped painted &
repainted strata of each layer marking an idea in
progress.

"I really am fine" she wrote "I went to Africa last
June to see the Mountain Gorilla of Dwonda I am very
happy" it's love at the base of it all love stops
the heart goes on but love stops Stops Stop
it! love! Stop it!

Dashboard Idol

or

Imbecility differs from idiocy. In idiocy the mind
is not developed; in imbecility it is imperfectly
developed. Idiocy is absence of mental power;
imbecility is feebleness of mental action. See Idiot
story of

Remember that night when the lights got up & walked
on the water ice
glazed on the streets seeming cellophane What's
real is not objects but the space around them your
fevered body under the cool walnut trees Observe
how multiplication is making dark circles in the atmosphere
overhead blue water on the radio Stage
for the illumination of a mirage inside the beat of
the songs he really broke her heart dee dee dee da da
she's waiting for a change of his dee dee dee dee
well . . . wasn't everyone like that? Wasn't a part
of love the love of being in love in the first
place?

Driving

ice on the streets like
porcelain pillows
Who showed up & why or the question is did he hate her
what did it mean that he avoided her what did it mean
that he said I hate you what did it mean was
something wrong with her or was the pop-up lizard real?
he couldn't arrive at the same party couldn't
make small talk couldn't be dark & rained on wet damp
was he bitter or merely cultivating abstraction?
Allow!
me to dream the dream of closing my eyes to subtract
a place & place it

We
watch the swimmers intermitantly decapitated &
reinstated decapitated & reinstated whole
headless whole headless

love is not one kind or another
is fashioned of stumps one so fleet of
soup one fictive as
a cushion in a foolish melodrama
one gaunt garish garrulous gander
another seeks potato plots &
several dig famously where the map
has indicated fortune one is a giraffe
space bursts open in a wound
air cracks a corner hissing
night reclines at the circus
milk takes on the color of everyday
stone rebukes the finder & shrivels up
toast is like a taco for the rich
beer makes you stupid
beer makes us stupid wine too
see me about this later Stupid
water has a point
water deserves better
water is not burnt sienna or plain sienna or blue
my cup my shoes
I fill my cup I fill my shoes
sand is not yellow or brown or creme or white or
black really
sand is permanent we sit on it
from here we see
 the bathers
 leave their feet at the edge of the lake

the happiest parts were the parts she made up

Nothing there to pursue
he's got a heart like an iron lung
no sign of life vapid fair & fairly

"Meet us on the other side!" I shouted to
the running boy "Don't say that in here!"
X blurted as our little cart picked up speed
on the cemetery path.

how I feel is cool very cool

cold fills the south window
ice wells in the south window
snow drifts in the south window
icicles drap in the south window
a bitter wind
a frozen surge at the south window
the bitter neck of winter is in the south window
the bitter neck of winter is in the south window

You hear the train go West in the south window
& then retire to bedlam a wind would
come up a wind stone of heart
would flower in icy petals over the window
in the south over the south window

Talking to distract the listener.
or Hanging-out with the Beloved equals a festival

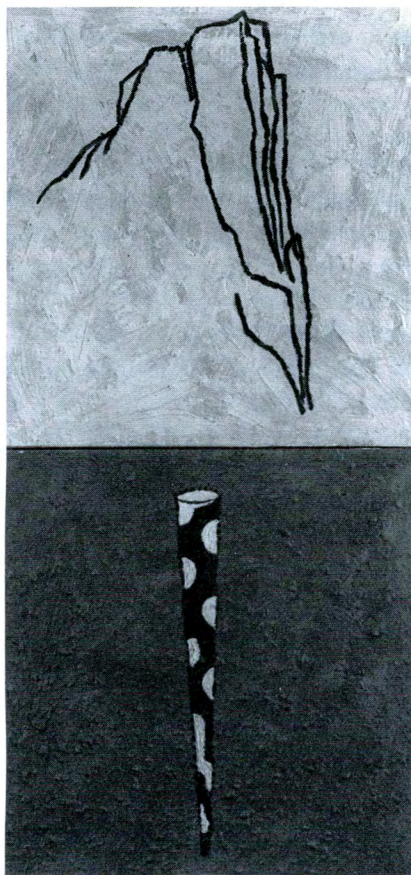
I fold the blanket to end winter. Cézanne said
each part was as important as the whole (so) I
bought a clock because it had Mexico (stamped) on
the back

I never dreamed I held you in my arms.
Certainly the sum of the parts is more expensive than
the whole. By mistake we invited a woman who'd just
spent five years in a cloister She was talking a
mile a minute Her mother
saved clocks clocks of all
dimension Who appointed herself Warden of
Punctuality Collector of one
through 12 Madonna of brass & porcelain inscribed in
ordinary & Roman numerals
III VII flipping forward & Flung
up behind invention of wheel of
time All circle of "What goes around
comes around nah nah" mows down the home
they made mows down mother's shelf
charming end-table of birds-eye-maple Walnut
gnarled claws swollen jade lucid
obsidian basin O Silent Faces O

strange population!

Wound each would gain or lose
& hourly sing unsynchronized. Then all the
rooms would fill in clammering festival of Bongs!
so various & drunken with rapsody in that music that

has no notes



TOM MANDEL

PRELUDE IN PRESTO

I conclude that it is not in a man's power to use reason always nor always to be at the peak of human freedom; yet that he always does his best to preserve his being, and, whether enlightened or unenlightened, attempts and does by the sovereign right of nature everything he attempts and does; since he has as much right as he has power and strength. It follows that the right and law of nature . . . forbids nothing but what nobody desires and nobody can do: neither strife, nor hatred, nor anger, nor deceit does it forbid. It is opposed to nothing appetite can suggest.

Glass fragments glint in the black-
top onramp. A pool that light filled
spills in retooling touches. Solitude
of facts shattered in the street
of hints; elements fractal, details
a point of fashion.

Academy's a swelling gang. There's
labor in phase a decked up hindrance,
but I'm not showing my cards. Derision
rescues; rocks grill your features
as if they were hewed from the profile
of a treaty with the elements.

O mortal vision forces sing, that
sometime skips to duplicates' subtraction:
"Fellow, my fellow, the hound says
hello, slip into tomorrow for
your sons'll be with me. O sons'll
be with me, sons'll . . ."

He tears himself from prone
ground to terrify the King's unleavened
courtesies, who leaving that same night
returns on the same night;
yet what do you make, oh mild grit?
Is this your strong point?

How unlikely such a thing should
happen once of excellence and happen
again by chance, by lack, still stripe
of sun fusing to stalks of lawn.
Capital segments combine. None has
transferred rights and not

frightened her ruler. Scissor-
ing cliffs, harbors wincing. Ever
a steady moment external, unaided.
Rough dreams to remember,
safety. Wind tremolo, preamble widens.
A telegram logged in remote water.

Hell is distracted items, foamy
scum & fennel weed in the channel, a
gashed link of chain fence where green
drips tug & stars flash
in palomino eyes that stare back from
the inner surface of a well.

Caution beckons, a challenge is
torn from a carton. Will, choose
afresh; summon a name of rage. Give
thanks, oh communications expert,
that long, so long ago a room of dreams
switched off to study this

steady world. Let none doubt
my return. An instant thrashed our free
domain. Forest corona wire. Far. Forget.

You wear her mask willingly,
dive through the bottom of a glass-bottomed
boat. Then insist to talk.

Firm is fire, mind on empty
gut on rage to fill. Sun shelters tatters
of earth. Overturned cap burning, capsized
liquid and sunk hosts' apogee.
Stars at a peek. Oh no it's agreed
(smiling). Yet why have regard

for many things will be over
or for others to stay the same. A
proverb, that's nice, and you voice
another. Needless to be quick
in spoiled ooze. Commemoration on which
marbles roll raised names.

I am with you to struggle at our
learned art, to speak our names into
the room of air, expanded element in
this flower, slick branches betraying
our path where moist leaves reflect a
cover between white and level.

Diffused convictions succumb under
trial. A brain of history holes it up
in every angle. Honor's our precious dust,
and releases the imprisoned wall
asleep in an adjective's late-planted core,
luxuriant sapped December.

Founder and foetus dance
to still their warmth. Blunt fortune
focuses moments. Fortune's crisp peace
corrodes the shoreline, mending
fomented solitude in its lax locus of
intricate passion spun through

enemy locales. Sounds like "beauté";
planet tones thread air's lace face.
Time with accents lapses, cherry head
swelling, and stains a root whose
secret tumbles out; O ignorant link,
the system sky bends earth

in indignation. Prelude in
presto. No silence. Sun says goodbye,
and a flag cuts off the head. The window
shade's a place where head
in shadow of a shadow. To one who sees
our torsos on a page, no wall

separates the instrument of tubes
as face down it heads downtown head
to sidewalk, obscured instrument of
desire, an arrow's extending way.
Make roofs of canvas, cut oblong
skylights connect chalked arrows;

indistinct figure trapped body
astride. Dark window, incredulous pair
running brickwork of a line, a street-
long dogs dissected like sleep
in the deserted factory. Ecstatic
struggle to control the wheel. A

bell rings in the face Hell severs.
Gas balloons rise. Instruments of torso,
obscure cubes of depth whose one face
visible's belied, obscured in
downward oblong arrow's gaze, stride,
wrapped in the rollback of filtered

figures. Chalk traps of light,
darklike pairs guess at the instinct
wall of window, door to closet ceiling.
Lighttrap floor or taxi's noise
punches its brick and talks. "To run,
it says, train with the boys."

ALAN DAVIES

ROKUMAI

A f t e r w a r d s

The libido butters the ego.

Memories of shady stable moments tumbled in
all afternoon.
Shady stable moments.

Forgiveness is a false forgetting
While forgetting's fruit is sweet.

Poetry's
thoughts with extra language in them.

The Fifties

Perhaps we have been somewhat remiss in our laxity.

The beautiful and lustily bare pubic tree this winter
against the stiff flags on the Jersey shore.

Tractor trailers buses and trucks.

That's the factory where father died.
Like that.

Mary Lane's great line
I sit unmoving
in a moving train.

All of these minutes are composed of days.

Emplacements

1. To capture on paper the reflection in the pond of a bird flying over it.
2. Poetry is not saying what you think.
3. Learning to use the tools without damaging the materials.
4. Wean yourself from books.
5. Writing is as important as brushing your teeth, almost.
6. Is there time for poetry?
7. You create me first hand.
8. Time is information.
9. I don't need thoughts.
10. Euphoria not metaphoria.
11. He was as good as his word.
12. I've been charged with meaning.

There is no other.

Obsession is a passion outside of its own place.

Hence,
Romeo's passion for Juliet,
his obsession about Lancelot.

There's no getting away
from a man's name, and that's too bad.

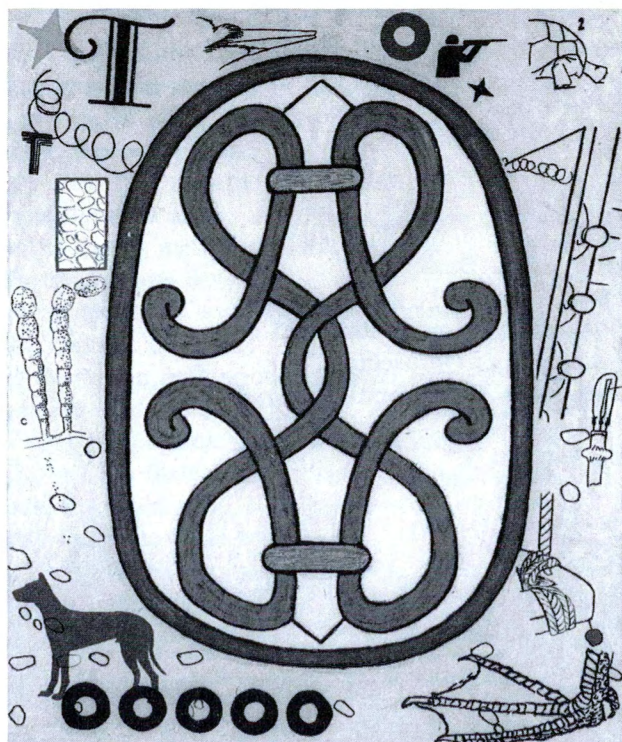
Eating and sustaining the pure meat of understanding
from way back.

The content decays
but the message remains.

Unseen I see it all
walking away into the mill of history.
Here our small ordinary habitations
hold onto the radio phone
keeping us within the epidermal crust.
How simple to be slow
where the fossils merely couldn't wake up
and the steel towns decayed.
Amber mixes easily with hand-tinted color
and the stillness of times
lets us know that nothing has changed over the years.
Our movement from place to town is corpuscular.
Small cars stretch their way into the horizon.
Nothing gets us further away than our imaginations,
the tools that train us.
We only leave the earth to fly
and we only fly to return to the earth.
I know you from somewhere.

Bush

As the lady on the bus said
apropos of Gorbachev,
he looks like a conniver to me.



RAY DiPALMA

FROM *TERRITORY*

Pollen pigment
the real impulse of periphery
knotted in speech
like death
fear's magic lethargy

distraction's lead wafer
on the tongue shapes duration
and the fact of memory
its status in the proposition
its purpose in the process
intentional poise
over legible shifting proportion

agreement makes systems
if you weren't so readily amused
more people would respect you
frustration tags your vowel sounds
and your consonants distribute a fiction
like a manipulated photograph

prompt random and common
scanning tracking blocking
advance bounded the distinctive natural order
graph tick focus fumble wave
current distracted late lateral
coaxed combed shook counted

in the mercury lair
a hive

Persuasive solitude
rosies the intelligence
Flamingoes for fingers
and a broken foot
Luck darts the length
of the dry ditch and back
It had to try something
No telling what would
happen next— the maroon
egg of revenge caught in the throat



Irked lot in big coats
and fat leather chairs
all jake torpedo artists
cultivating predicaments
wild and dreadful they
size-up with a knuckle-ear
calculus . . . imposing
silk clumsy jackals
cuff the coin

The balk was dead fresh
and ephemeral when it
caught the blinking booed
The balk was dead fresh
but it kept on moving
along like the wizard
of walk and postponed
legato while hoot-hooting
the overwrought who
could only jaw the echo
and glare— dud frenzy
in the cheap seats with
less than a minute left
The balk was dead fresh
a spasm, a quaver hemmed
by the blowing dust but
hanging in the eye was
a zigzag jerking the high
kick into an apparatus
run on a fuckup cold
raver in a brouhaha should
have gone with the flow

Money makes an outside
the oddly equated division
like a parcel of land
fenced by a category of trees
and broken fence that share
a record of folly— cockeyed
and frantic in its origins
and retarded by access and cash

a scrap of correction
fiercest when the words are cold
and the white that stark
sepulchral blank holding
the sameness that amazes the world
presumption turned to sawdust
a line of sight an extended moment
small dots between the letters
balanced midway on the vertical
isolate the secure tether
and lock the horizontal
title only as deep as the accent

White shirt

panther's heart

nothing at all

a black scrawl

full sail

one two

three

two one

three (got)

from here

and here to there

this is it there

they are

the five

arm against

the wall

the scrub of brick

vapor trail

and window glare

piano tar and chalk

Eye odd
the nimble cargo
parasites rich
in the highsign

odd eye
grudge freight
heavy shadows
between small patches of light

webs of dust
steam and rust
for fortune's
second wind



ROSMARIE WALDROP

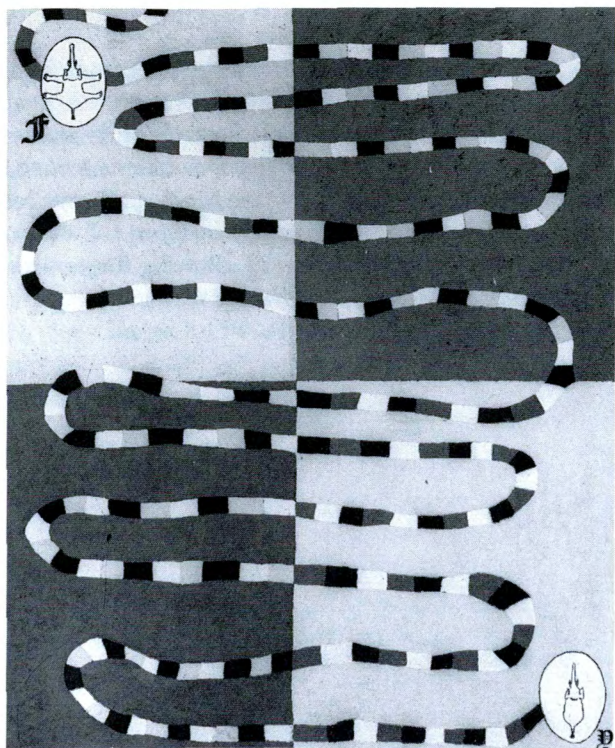
FROM *LAWN OF EXCLUDED MIDDLE*

My anxiety made you wary. As if I tried to draw you into a new kind of sexuality, a flutter of inner emptiness implying hunger to frame the momentary flight of birds with emotional reference and heat. Any initiation anticipates absolute abandon with the body misunderstood as solid, whereas images dissolve their objects. Even with deep water ahead, even though the shores of syllogism may be flooded, we must not turn around. Behind us, incursions into our own field of vision, a mirror to lose our body out of the corner of the eye. It may look like sentences we understand, yet quenches no thirst, no matter how hard we stroke it. But anxiety is a password which does not require a special tone of voice. Rather than to immersion in mysteries I was only leading you to common ground.

Whenever you're surprised that I should speak your language I am suddenly wearing too many necklaces and breasts, even though feeling does not produce what is felt, and the object of observation is something else again. Not modulating keys, not the splash that makes us take to another element, just my body alarmingly tangible, like furniture that exceeds its function, a shape I cannot get around. The way one suddenly knows the boulder in the road for a boulder, immovable, as if not always there, unmodified by inner hollows or the stray weeds and their dusty green, a solid obstacle with only trompe-l'oeil exits toward the subtler body of light accumulating in the distance.

I worried about the gap between expression and intent, afraid the world might see a fluorescent advertisement where I meant to show a face. Sincerity is no help once we admit to the lies we tell on nocturnal occasions, even in the solitude of our own heart, wishcraft slanting the naked figure from need to seduce to fear of possession. Far better to cultivate the gap itself with its high grass for privacy and reference gone astray. Never mind that it is not philosophy, but its raw material, electrons jumping from orbit to orbit to ready the pit for the orchestra, scrap meanings amplifying the succession of green perspectives more than what I'm thinking, moist fissures, spasms on the lips.

A window can draw you into the distance within proximity all the way to where it vanishes with the point. This is not a hocuspocus which can be performed only by kinship terms. The glass seems to secure perspectives that can shoulder the cold stare of so many third persons while our image is resolved in favor of inaccessible riverbeds. Alternating small and large measures, the dust on the pane is part of the attraction, a way of allowing the environment in. So would a stone's throw, substituting the high frequencies of shattering for the play of reflections.



EDMOND JABÈS

BEFORE THE FIRST MOMENT OF THE FORE-BOOK

translated from the French by
Rosmarie Waldrop

What is this emptiness we can hold all in one hand?

“Our resemblances assemble the remains of an infinite memory run dry,” he said.

The city debases the face, scrambles the likeness.
The desert gives back our forgotten features.

The desert is a divine mirror ground fine.

Our wanderings are an anxious search for resemblance with ourselves at the heart of our impossible resemblance with God.

“To wander,” he said, “would only be the temptation to reconstitute the cut up face of absence.”

“You walk,” Reb Gazlan wrote to Reb Aslan, “on the face of your childhood whose dawn is a smile, and whose night, deep sleep.”

“I walk,” the latter replied, “on my face disfigured by the stones on our roads. For centuries the bruised soil of our faces has been aching.”

The horizon is always the emptiness of a face.

1

A host of humans, strangers to their state, their labor, strangers to their steps, to the city pavements, still tied to the fog-wrapped soil: what shall we call them except a global name which rivets them to a great fire of mourning as to one pair of shackles?

The bit of ashes I am taking with me—where? why?—ashes taken from this mountain which towers over the world: is it the body of a friend, an enemy, or—who knows—my own? My own inside the others, this burned part of me inside each of them. But they were so many that hardly any of me is now left inside myself.

Devouring crowd, devoured by flames, crowd in ashes. Does writing from now on mean separating the ashes of my name from theirs?

There is always, in some quiet place, a flame lying in wait for the least bit of straw, a flame which stubbornly refuses to go out, drunk with conflagration.

The dead of tomorrow are legion. The books bear witness, succeeding each other with the regularity of all that is mortal. The future is forever just a word in suspense.

It is raining for the first man. The earth can expect to flower. The ocean is jubilant. The wave crashes onto open, crowned beaches.

The footprints we notice are tracks of the future. The future is measured by the creature's intelligence and determination. Everywhere the work of man, already. God grows vague and finally assumes His indifference.

Then I was assailed by a multitude of faces, familiar or hardly glimpsed, comrades in fortune or misfortune, brought by chance or long looked for.

"The face does not die," said a sage. "It remains face even though absent, molded on absence as one molds a word on emptiness."

I don't dare, so great is my fear, put a name on any face, on my neighbor's no more than on my own.

Immortality reassures. Time terrifies.

All risk is taken in time, against time; but sometimes for it.

The time of the book is the time of a name at risk.

Sarah resembles Sarah; and Yukel, Yukel.

If I go on writing, is it to make them run new dangers through their evident likeness to themselves, as if I could not bear to imagine them at peace, finally, at the heart of hearts of the book? Or is it, on the contrary, because there is no peace in the book, nor for the book, and we constantly need to challenge it over again in its words and its flesh?

"In the Nazi camps," Yukel had written, "we were starved books whose titles you could no longer make out. Resemblance among creatures barely alive had reached—O noon of crime—its zenith."

Does Sarah resemble Sarah? Does Yukel resemble Yukel?

And Yaël and Elya and Aely?

O death, unsilvered mirror.

"What is irreplaceable, what has no substitute, is not reason, but the unreason of resemblance which only thrives on what is interchangeable," said Reb Tamon.

"I don't know this book. Your book is one among many. I don't know all books. How could I? And Yaël, who is she? And Elya and Aely?

"What is this story you are telling me? What dream, what wound? I have my own dreams, my own stories, my own wound."

"Our days and nights are days and nights of the word where books call to each other, touch for a moment and are lost together."

(God is a stranger to His memory.

*God speaks within oblivion. His word means oblivion.
It is a word of oblivion and oblivion of all words.*

Resemblance is the pledge of recognition.

Does solidarity work through resemblance? In that case we would only be solidary with those like us.

"It is reassuring that God resembles us," wrote Reb Matalon. "Recognizing ourselves in Him makes us solidary with one another.")

2

God is a word without end.

Any end insults the question.

The question of the infinite is the feverish question a closed world puts to a world flaunting its openness.

Miracles are beyond question.

"The word *God* interests me," he said, "because it is a word which defies comprehension, which, because it cannot be appre-

hended as a word, escapes sense, transcends and annuls it. So that it is always a word before or after the word, a word without word, only in the past or future, a useless word whose use shocks the mind.

"Questioning God means questioning the void. Hence pure questioning without object, questioning the question.

"How to understand God? God cannot be enclosed. God's closure is God: a non-closure or after-closure.

"To question the ungraspable, the unthinkable, grasped and thought in its arbitrary absence, in its jealously protected not-knowing, in failure, pain and blood.

"To question God means pushing Him to His death, means making the place of death into the place of the indeterminable, anxious questions of God."

And he added: "I write at the feet of a word which cannot be explained to the words I live with. A word which invades and troubles, which defies the human order which other words try to respect."

"Is the unpronounceable name of God not also," he said elsewhere, "the erased name of the unthought on which all thought crashes and breaks?"

("God is a word too many which disturbs our peace like a desire weighing on desire—an undesired, but irresistible desire," wrote Reb Gabri.)

The first and last book share an unprescribable silence.

Any page of writing is a knot of silence unraveled.

The abyss is quiet.

3

How could you, Sarah, have forgotten the laugh of the man you brushed against when you were arrested in the street, or the louder laughs of those vicious schoolboys who rudely pointed their fingers at you?

Yukel was not far, caught like you in the raid, and you exchanged a look so hopeless that their tentacled laughs seemed suddenly—as if they had in spite of themselves bathed in your moist eyes, your held back tears—to gleam like wounded inkfish out of the sea, brandished by stray fishermen.

On the sidewalk opposite, however, stood a young man your age or a bit younger who stared at you with an expression of suffering and revolt.

It was a beautiful sunny day.

What happened to that young man? I followed him into the bar whose door he had pushed open. I saw him at the counter, knocking down one glass of wine after another without a word. Then he went to the men's room, and I heard him vomit, vomit, vomit.

Was he the man who years later tried in vain to reach me before leaving for another continent? He had written simply: "The laughter is inside the book. A page of writing is made up of invisible mouths whose teeth are two lines of letters each, from the top of the page to the bottom. The words no longer have sense. They only demonstrate whiteness ringed with a few letters which belonged or belong to the inseparable faces without age or future, which were swallowed up in the laughter."

We write, as we paint, with ivory black which, as you know, is the fine black powder obtained by mixing ivory and burned bones.

("Leave the laughs with the laughter. This could well be wisdom," said Reb Hemsì.

"Such wisdom we don't care for," replied Reb Teloul. "You don't leave a dagger lying on a dagger."

"The mouth is never more than a wound in the face, in the absence of face," said Reb Sherki.

The dying man laughed so loud that they stuffed earth into his mouth.

The earth laughed so loud that they stifled it with millions of dead.

("At dusk, the universe is written in burned umber," he said.)

RAE ARMANTROUT

THE MIX-UP
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

THE MIX UP

1

The pen seemed oddly juicy, nice, in what she thought of as a dry mouth, but she was worried, either because she shouldn't be a sucker or because she shouldn't have sensations unexpectedly. Maybe because they shouldn't last and what if this continued? Though now, she noticed, worry had for some time replaced the pen.

2

Ripples are beautiful
by extension.

It's as if a series
were a stay

of execution.

Say, a list of words
starting with the letter "e":

emit, evict, evocative

EVACULATA.

Rhapsodic to say
the birds, extending their calls,
are beginning anywhere
and adding up to zero.

3

But I want to stay *because* I remember when I was organizing it all, in a frenzy really, trying to pack fear away everywhere, so interested in the work from the date of my first success, and now, with the effects labelled, *still* not bored because I'm sure that some could be stirred up again.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Can the Reader recall shining
fissures between tiles,

an organist
playing “Ol Man River?”

Is shiny pretty
because water’s wet?

I can almost hear Maxim Lord complain
my data is inconclusive.

“Almost had it now,” says one old Shopper
to the next.

•

This *is* the cry
that Mother recognized!

So Maxim Lord had faked his death.
The plot was hatched by Captain Britain
to protect his Son,
recuperating in MurderWorld.

•

To carry a tune
or follow an argument
takes all the sensationalism
it can get
from the ability to grow.

“As if Inklings were divisible!
It’s a ruse
to determine how many Superheroes
have slipped into Your Majesty’s Domain.”

•

After the scream, when neither has changed,
that is the interesting part.

After the chase sequence
a drawing
appears to say
“Space-Ghost, it’s *us!*”

PASQUALE VERDICCHIO

THE CULPABILITY OF DISSIMULATION

1 from a beginning of self
what follows attempts at cover
through which is born simulation
Not veils of false representation
but both the serpent and the dove
to lighten contradiction and diminish danger

2 taking licence the shadows search
elsewhere the place where best to consider
Example and cause in which return all
and their functions know each other
Some opinions express the elements
of those well disposed to representation

3 Through the mouths of different peoples
indivisible testimonies throw love to love
and being the said and done relation
and being for mere personal interest
more occasion is added than
the needed adventure written with candour

4 the emptiness of words of thoughts
is what opinion and talk become
Not a blemish of lies should remain
Vibration of contrary space The good
of the same not to forget its own suggestion
Tense perimeter the need for prudence
retains its theme its connection toward opportunity

5 The art of dissimulation subsists
in things that seem to call for it but
its name distances Disembodied things
call to corporeal ones and the sincere
need hidden behind a veil of darkness
and violence in which the false is not
created but cyclically reposes

6 In fraudulent abuse reduced to mere sign
a mantle against the elements the value
of mutation Only the prodigious hand
shown without restriction engages
in deception contrary to invention
a profession that does not lend itself
to profession The attention brought
to the unusual masks benevolence

7 Humours and blood call attention
to poorly veiled sentiments Too clear
the flame and troubled face what to attribute
and accomodate: movements are initiated
not hindered by unbound souls

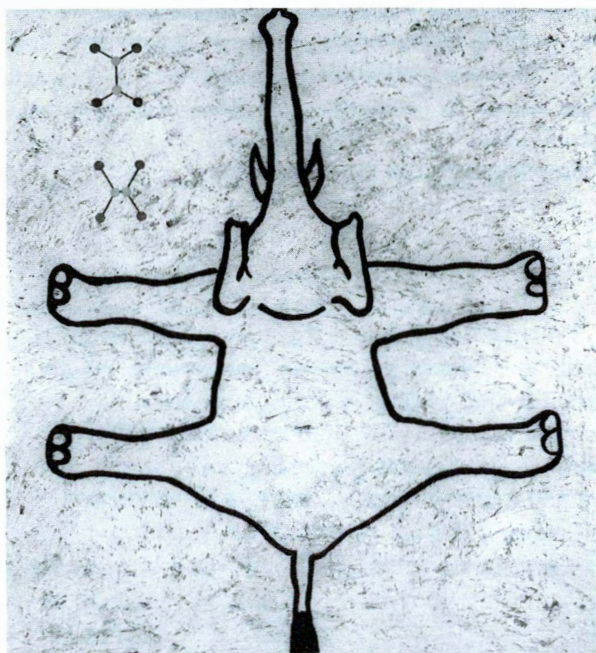
8 A person's familiar setting or other
place not used to seeing the practice confirm
Full authority and questions for various voyages
Observe incidents with great disposition
each mutation is what it engenders and not itself

9 Meaning industry not to appear not to make
known but express and in the mention of rage
and ruin to be held if untimely
and its limits kept the will of horn and iron
that has no prescribed term or dimension

10 Only an assumption the defects
of mortality following wrongfully considered
disorders: unhindered without recourse continued
What is subject to mutation dissimulates
its surface objects to contained cadavers
in elemental space Only light is
the correspondence to the noble doctrine

11 stillness brought on by intellect and sense
what needs to be expressed and not constrained
rebels often to the sobriety of words and facts
Hoc opus hic labor the inheritance of fire
and health Shadow proceeding according to
a hidden and manifest track the rule of incidence
time and place: precipice of sense without notice

12 The order of artifice lowers its hand into
the self walks separate to take full notice
of the value of its experience few would care
or be curious to hear What consolation can carry
a brief restoration resumes the will



KEITH WALDROP

SILK

Below a certain intensity of light, colors fade to black and white—or, rather, to gray. Things are best seen then—if we can resist the natural impulse to fix directly on them—out towards the periphery, where rods far outnumber the sparsely scattered cones. But they are vague and their color is gone. In the spectral twilight, my dark-adapted eyes find stars—lost again if I try to look at them.

Completely submerged. So quickly
injured and obscured by dust, phan-
tastic worlds, simultaneously. Irregular.

Daydreaming of fabulous wealth, castles,
foundations of cities. Disturbances
set it in vibration, so naturally.

Deprived by darkness of the decor I supposed essential, I
find it after all not so absolutely necessary. Instead of pan-
ning across the things that are, I wait. And moments, one
after another, pass in review, steadily, with an air of inevita-
bility.

Double nature, extremely
elastic. The longer I look, the
stronger the enchantment.

From what I see, see at this particular moment, I turn, bringing to mind everything invisible, the rest of the world, my small view's vast remainder. I regard it all—as if by some strange geometry all lines crossed just at the point of my perception—not merely as unknown, but somehow, in its entirety, forgotten: an amnesia almost universal, its only flaw the small shard of my awareness.

I had thought objects essentially gray, sculpted in black and white—only that sunlight threw over them a mirage of color. Lately I have seen the grisaille of landscapes in moonlight also as a veil, covering untouched and incalculable volumes.

It is hard for us—creatures of surface—to reckon with depth, whether of earth or ocean. Under our feet, out of the air and the light, life is unimaginable—though we know perfectly well how waters heave with animals and plants and how the organic extends into the soil, deeper than the roots of the tallest trees.

Legs about twice as long as
the body. In the grip of powerful
entities. Sedentary under stones.

Objects around me, I take as elements of a vanity, but the dark of evening breaks them down into something less neutral: shadows issue odd invitations from surfaces blank by daylight. As edges more and more fail to separate, things unfocus and my distractions thin into less than air.

Persecution, blissful tranquility, lack
of coherence. Loops of a hackled band. Con-
cealed from sight, but in position.

Rarely seen but conspicuous, surrounding
retreat. Phases and crises. Long periods of
hell, purgatory, fragmented situations.

Swallows (and, I suppose, bats, could we see them against
the dark sky) serve as barometer, rising to the level of their
insect prey, as it rises with the falling weight of air, higher
and higher towards downpour. Somewhere in the spiral of
stars, there may be clouds of growth and decay, heavy with
sensation, pulsing outward from no center. Immemorial
processes throb behind any glance.

The world extends—its utmost space—from the spinal cord
into the lower brain. Time, the cortex, grants us moments,
one by one, in which to scan, facet by facet, the little that
appears.

Uncanny import, vague riddles. Monday does not
rally. I sing. I count to 12,000. I see
other figures, dead and living, four kinds of silk.

Velvety black. Submerged in ex-
perience, with senses full, but
usually the visual. Lead-colored tinge.

CLAUDE ROYET-JOURNOUD

LOVER AND IMAGE

translated from the French by
Keith Waldrop

Simply had to start and to lay aside fear. Not wait. She's where the burn blurs . . . up the wrist again, hunting for the head . . . The fingers seize what the eye conceals. She rushes into the image.

vegetation as wall
all that's good for nothing
on the wrist the mark
stretches
the walls are white or old rose
she bends her head
"but the forest rules in the antecedent"
later
the magnified detail will be easier to see

air drops into the locks
her head grazes the soil

1

The child speaks already to the multitudes. His hand recognizes the outdoors.

2

Attention is to the rear. He comes from too far away to stop.

3

Ruins, some characters the painting detains—divided or set off by the square.

4

Red. Blue. Violet. Green. These colors to complete a gesture.

5

Pain. Body rendered to sight. *Sense resides in the possibility of recognizing . . .*

6

The steps of the temple. The dead rise up, upsetting old categories.

7

The visual ground is, in essence, ownerless.
The light no longer jostles objects.

8

Among the plants, I can hardly make out the animals. A transparence. And this landscape without water. This verticality which pushes back the sea. Air and cries. Solemn or shrill. All that was uncertain. I move about the edges of your sleep. Surprise is in the mouth.

9

Maternal rustle in the voice. A few words before fear. She rummages and rips. Words came from the mouth like a bludgeon. Settled on mischief. *Objects contain the infinite.*

not cognizant of the phrase
not spreading the disaster
in each room
according to the density of things
he sets about tearing down the whole

PETER GIZZI

THE CRUSADES

. . . for the longest time not
so much as a going under,
rather as a singularly dark
ascension into a remote
neglected part of heaven.

—Rainer Maria Rilke

Only in connection with a
body does a shadow make
sense.

—Rosmarie Waldrop

MATINS

We can accept nothing
if there be not praise
of the word and light
to spade the page

this time:
a vault into which a god must not enter.

Benign record,
tracing the history
of a pulse from stone.
Sweet contusion,
taking only this blue swath.
Where I go.

The ornamental mind is feral.

PRIME

The lesson of the disc
has not yet ascended into place

A statement:
“the oracle has been given”
is an event that bears no terms

to be a voice of an earth

The face of the one/the mask of the word
Intuition is given a name:
wreath circle and sphere

and the difficulty here
we cannot die
the difficulty
here is the full act

Therefore and whatever
need not apply

TERCE

Kindness is a trace element found
To be given in need. A cardinal
Feather discovered in an ice-storm
From some distant march. There are paths
I have taken and then there is this walk,
An amend of earth and water is various
Forever yielding an original gesture.
Words cannot color this. Learning
Grace is composure of fear
Out of care for the *other*, and
To repeat this say "Let Us"
Continue from here.

SEXT

Anger seeks a violent end

glass broken against flesh
will not release this passion

the planet spins around the sun

ellipse is the emblem of my decay
prayer the posture of my wanting

flight is invisible

unnecessary is invincible
while tolerance trends

hands carry food on a tray

hunger seated indefinitely
hands hold a glossy print of this years . . .

wanting a piazza will not reveal lips

betrayal is sudden sharp unfathomable
a ribcage a shoulder blade

My clavicle is plumbago

NONES

Dear Miss Lonely Hearts,
This condition of sky is terminal.
It does not wend
Or want. The dream
Of the afternoon gaze
Is open, impenetrable like a sphinx
Our wanting waits wanting. Time
Merely an impression worn upon
The brow. My reach extends lives
To make of these hands

Monuments

VESPERS

Gentle vespers do not be sullen

tho sullen and sanguine
are your colors in cloud light,

to have seen thru the surface
of your words proud beam
of a pilgrim heart immigrant
mouth and brow revealing

an exiles eyes: time kept
on a clock whose hands are breathing

liberation of the phantom tongue.

II.

The Book Of Change

is text of invisible properties
recorded by a host of physical prodigies,
enumerating the sad

and mystical appendages within:

the third eye inverted limbs
and the anti-navel of the severed

hand of scripture.

COMPLINE

Saturn's window opens new lawns

in time there is understanding
for a widow's walk, mite and peak
this pain in the day's waxing
out of ken. Celestial

tremolo as offering,

an elderly arm in a heat wave
is vulnerable, like unexpected
news of illness at sundown.
Dinner is over, the guests
have gone and you were not
among them,

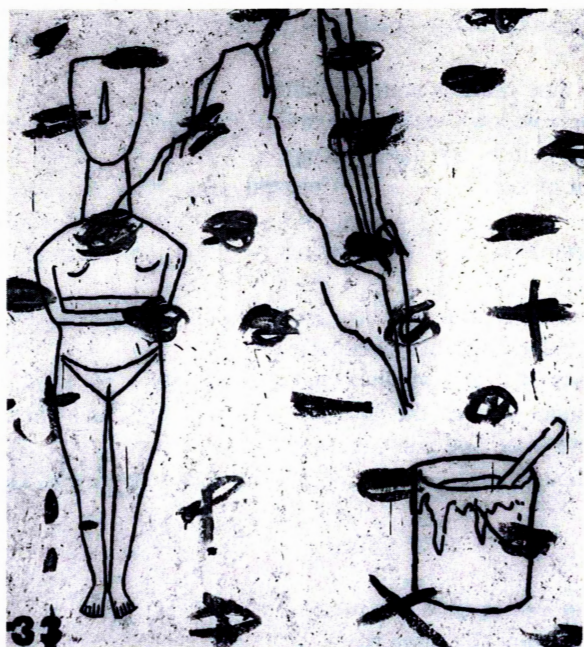
a place setting

removed in time is a pretense.
this rationale, effusive.

Forgiveness for a new moon.

All we have is this sky
these trees and sleepless nights,
there is a constellation I have
never seen, it consists of everyone
I love. The portrait of

heaven keeps on the face of a sundial.



LYN HEJINIAN

FROM *THE CELL*

I had never really felt that my
 name was my substantive
Something switching in terrain
A grandmother is a factor in the
 economy of the stream
She's in an exchange system of irreversible
 flow
A cyclops with one eye but a
 grandmother with two breasts
It would have been easy to steal
 the bricks but I paid for them
Actually, more easy
There was a long line but the
 checker had not produced it
Someone saying "Mom" with rewards
One wonders whether to be officious about
 the stranger's baby endangering itself
The child (not the stranger's) listens to
 the story as close to the stomach
 as it can
The event which would be over when
 it was told
It was major
The man with his penis showing closing
 the gap between shrugs
The modest discontinuity—
A person is keeping its time (balance)
 between the waking world and the sleeping
 one
Immodestly nagging unhappily while in actuality happy
In actuality actuality

June 26, 1988

It rains here in winter on quantity
and content
In summer it thinks all the time
Theory is a snapping term
Someone's worry can't be independent
The traveller keeps its eye in its
hand
To the weather what it writes is
not a proper Weather Diary
The difference between condition and cognition
Drought the nation over and over
Cancer and leather
But the poem is a voluptuous measure
of resources
I couldn't defer my weather to the
walls
Its objects are phenomenal
The will—a great trilogy

June 30, 1988

We go a distance on a tongue
 between fixed points
A post of rain and a post
 of grain
I'll always explain myself
The objects of the will
The oyster installed
The hairs are springing heart
But the hairs are epiphenomenal
Blue
Blue can't be secluded
And with a kind of optimism I
 can supply myself with thoughts
Irritations
Those increments
We will have communication but in how
 many moves

July 1, 1988

The crossing is very soft where the
ant is on its stomach
Half in degrees, half in gallons—these
are the intimates of the description
But as implacable as a privilege I
digress like a person sunning on a
rock
Crawling on and on, an impression of
the grass on its inflamed palms, on
its style
Lyricism—it makes the country seem far
away
The different stages of it are so
short that each day is a measure
A geranium is posted in its ground
A pelargonium actually at the tip, which
is mottled, ruffled
The Marquis de Sade not having been
overly orderly with his notions, having all
of them
Synchrony is a form of cruelty
The lover of nature is afraid of
itself or rather of a correlation
Nature cannot protect impressions
But it is as they say clean
dirt
A person crossing its own closed green
and yellow shadow through feeling that it's
feet were the right size

July 3, 1988

Minute into minute, pebble into pebble
The object is itself but always ceasing
to be itself
Space has its sensualists
Boom: soap: a fountain in a potato
But compare this with oranges
Angels
Intervals
There is a field to that hawk's
tail
There is a wedge to this twilight
But no real temporal competence
Poetry lessons
Sleep is not a homogenous affair
Imagine that all experience can be divided
into parts but with the body and
the mind always on the same side
Two nights ago I am doing what
I could
Only there is no one to stand
by and observe it
Dreaming in a wakeful state—spotters at
listening posts set among poppies
That kind of intentionality
A woman with her breasts observant
Households use air for tendency and fire
for rising
They keep keeping
Static
Everything—all—anything
Aftermath
The aftermath is dislodged from its position
It's one small exception

July 4, 1988

Sociability is sometimes burdened with portentous trivia
I'm like a dachshund digging at something
to retrieve
A young woman with her parents arrives
and her father has sore feet
Independent of rules this means hysteria
Someone, probably I, says "It isn't your
feet it's your shoes"
This means to comfort him
A man in a different language loves
me—for him my character is in
the realm of possibilities
For one moment this too means hysteria
but without losing the lively consciousness of
my personality
Whatever your mind tends to suppose new
shivers roll
I use every part of my hand—
but somehow I have left my purse
and all my money at home
This, which is maybe money, is the
steady state of the psyche which produced
it
A rice paper intestine

July 5, 1988

We don't *understand* what we hear, we
 anticipate it
A hill in sunlight only slightly stubble
The trees can only partially dapple the
 blue shadows of the sunlight
There we were where x meets y—
 we moved and they met again
Sex is very cold to be inventive
Slightly thread
Placing an unfamiliar sound somewhere—under a
 binding left or right intrepidity
The pleasure of mentality is enormous
The wind a gorgeous barrier itself to
 deafness
We were birding in the cover—I
 had a sensation like love of schoolbooks
Very sore toes—
In the atomlike continuum, out of occupied
 trees
The tones were moodless—interwoven with credibility
But a person becomes *envious from observation*
 —some things being unequal so she can't
 imitate them
The sentence isn't chronological

July 8, 1988

A description of hazard, theory
What then doesn't wobble towards description
A person might ask if its mother
 is a natural or a cultural thing
A bundle or a burden of properties
There is heat in obesity equal to
 the thumping in a bulb which is
 purely reproductive named "Mom"
It isn't aboriginal to make as much
 noise as a theory of description
The bees are working backward
At first a man was there, but
 he was pregnant and didn't want to
 be stung by the bees
My personal mother was outlined when she
 got out of bed
Unfalsified
She expected a letter
An abalone
I was walking on the sides of
 my feet in the sand, trying not
 to make tracks identifiable as those of
 female feet
Thus I'm completely unembarrassed
There's a long way to go judging
The waters are bulging with description
Glossy with stillness, cups gliding, the waves
 sucking up the rising sand so it
 stands but only into part of the
 wave above which there's an effect of
 red glints, as in green rock
So it's less a sad theory

July 13, 1988

The explorer is inclined to look off
 eye-level
The pitch of its description leaves him
 or her feeling suspended
Hardly here and there a bee to
 be seen
So many younger poets thinking about the
 body physical, the person around its own
 spine or victim
But it's back—it's like a dream
 of thudding peaches—hard to see
In the sleep, eyes sort of cast
 up
They go to horrible heights for the
 motion of dreaming
The genitals are attracted by space and
 time—by what happens in them
The cloud drifts away—the event taking
 place is not affected by what happens
 in it
Speaking of such a context is sometimes
 like an egg but more like a bug
 —a bug continuing among bugs
I speak of sex strictly between . . .
The heat but drought of summer—everything
 only a moment of priority
And the propriety of the mouth with
 thought in it
A person over hearing—but by only
 a small measure
A lapping

July 17, 1988

The exhalation should or shouldn't count
Shouldn't
A sentence and ice
The dreams are almost silent
Something stimulated appetite
So someone feels more ample than usual
 taking up more space and time
An animal burned by cold is approaching
 from the right and there is no
 way to move so that it approaches
 from the left
Citizens are milling in the public grammar
Simple thirst and the related love of
 intoxication become examples of mute sentiments mutually
 held—because we didn't know what to
 say
Time is a mock function of the
 ocean
And a memory occurs in English
Calves
The animal looks like a cloud opposed
 to the wind
But all my judgments are threaded
I don't think I'd know x , f ,
 t , or any one of my friends
 if we encountered each other, me as
 I am and he or she naked
 with a bag over his or her
 head
Patricia?
Times change, up and down, in and
 out

Putting his hand through the shop window
 without breaking it, my father
Clearly I'd advocate an *interpretation of dreams*
 without etymology
But sexual redundancy—sexual things are encouraged
They can do
At the end of the bed, interpretable
 sheets
There are eyes in them, therefore faces
The dark imploding
There are no unemployed noises, no noises
 without things
But I hear, there is *more noise*
 than things
Almost all attributed

July 18, 1988

The dogs responded positively
Out of a single brain
Which they do

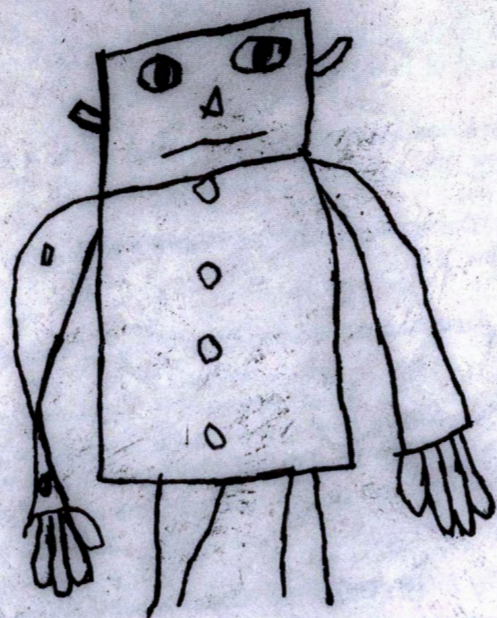
Really not a dream, from the particles
Wheel
White rain
“Already summer tilts its stringy shadows toward
October”
The description which is convincing as the
intervals
Otherwise words waste their length
And it will be as difficult to
separate as to know the future
Verticalizing supine figures
In their sensitive state of perfection—with
an interior mouth that speaks at this
moment of someone—the skull replaces papers
Leaves fall ahead of their trees
A human dream in the attended bed,
a human touch
Embraced by predictions: “I” will see “. . . ”

August 3, 1988

My description is apprehensive
Then the penis reached someone
That is the anti-narcissistic thought of it
A cough where peaches hang
The occasion didn't occur before this
The emotions in an area, the transmigration
The dream is passing through particles, between
toes
But words are toes
But with hypotenuse
The mathematics of his or her monomania
286, 312
It's only an apparent problem, like tradition
This is voluntary poetry . . . We are matrimonial
people . . . the poetry of volunteers
I was holding the child on my
lap to relieve anxiety
The buzz of the grasshoppers was very
true, the mew of a bird
Lulled by dirty water hissed a pile
driver and beside it stood its drivers
Dreams are superseded by suspense, suspense by
society, society by anxiety
Anxiety is suspended
There's an ellipse to measure the true
up and down, the verifiable (waking) in
and out
The shift
Revolving, moving for enormity
For onlook, color

August 9, 1988

FOOD OF IMMORTALITY



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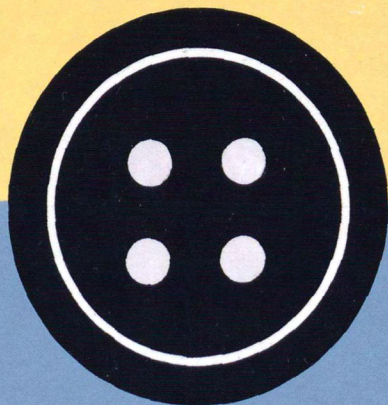
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